

# **The Origin of the Checkers and Modern Chess Game.**

## **Volume I**



**Govert Westerveld**











# **The Origin of the Checkers and Modern Chess Game. Volume I**



**GOVERT  
WESTERVELD  
2016**



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**The Origin of the Checkers and Modern Chess Game. Volume I**  
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**Academia de Estudios Humanísticos de Blanca**

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# DEDICATION

May this book be a reflection for all those who regard draughts as a simple game.

Draughts  
teaches us to think,  
discover, and  
search groping for depth in the ocean.

Draughts  
is unpredictable, - a dip in the still waters.  
Still waters run deep.

Draughts  
creates a habit of thought,  
the greatest wealth in life -  
development of multifaceted intelligence.

# Foreword

Until now the different scholars practically limited themselves to indicating France as the country of origin of the draughts game, among them the famous chess scholar Harold James Ruthven Murray<sup>1</sup> is emphasized. With respect to the new powerful dama in the modern chess game that was developed around the end of the XV century, the situation is not much better, since the scholars of this game believe that France, as well as Italy, could be the native countries of this modality of the game, in spite of the fact that the first chess book, Luis Ramirez of Lucena, with such new modality dates from 1497 and is of Spanish origin<sup>2</sup>.

In draughts we see a similar situation, since the first Spanish books about the game<sup>3</sup> of draughts have a very high level and date from the XVI century, while the first French book<sup>4</sup> comes from the XVII century and the game described is a very elemental one. Contrary to this evidence, the scholars did not consider it necessary to grant Spain the honour of being the creative country of the game of draughts and of the new modality in the chess game with the new dama. How is it possible that the different scholars never took into account the rich Spanish bibliography on both games? Was it a linguistic problem or

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<sup>1</sup> MURRAY, HAROLD JAMES RUTHVEN. (1952) A history of Board-games other than chess, Oxford. p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> LUCENA, LUIS RAMIREZ DE (1497). Repetición de amores e arte de Axedres con CL Juegos de Partido. Salamanca.

<sup>3</sup> TORQUEMADA, ANTONIO DE (1547). El ingenio, ò juego de Marro, de punta, ò Damas. Valencia.

<sup>4</sup> MALLET, PIERRE (1668). Le jeu des dames - *Avec toutes les maximes et règles, tant générales que particulières, qu'il faut observer an icelui. Et la méthode d'y bien jouer*". - Paris.

were there other existing circumstances that forbade this reasoning? In the case of draughts, this could be a reasonable cause for the Dutch scholars that did not master the Spanish language, but not for the English scholar Murray who knew several languages, among them Arabic. On the other hand, regarding the chess game it is difficult to accept that none of them knew the Spanish language. Therefore there had to be other motives for them to deny that Spain could be the country of origin of the new powerful dama in chess. Whatever it may be, there can be several motives, but happily in the last years we have observed a trend of two outstanding scholars that began to modify this point of view.

In the case of the new powerful dama in the chess game in Spain we rely on an outstanding chess investigator, Dr. Ricardo Calvo, who, since the eighties defends Spain as being the country of origin of the new powerful dama in the game of chess<sup>5</sup>. His investigations and discoveries of ancient written chess manuscripts from the XV century make it possible to assert that this new property is of Spanish origin<sup>6</sup>.

With respect to the draughts game we must not forget to mention Ir. Gerard Bakker of Utrecht (Holland), who with an initial work in 1983 and another advanced one in 1987 praises the Spanish<sup>7</sup> origin of

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<sup>5</sup> CALVO, RICARDO (1985a). Un nuevo manuscrito de ajedrez del siglo XV. Revista Jaque. San Sebastián Año XV. Núm. 173. 15 de abril, pp 252-253.

CALVO, RICARDO (1985b). Ein neues Schachmanuskript aus dem 15. Jahrhundert. Europa Rochade. Maintal. N.3, p. 28.

CALVO, RICARDO (1985c). Un nouveau manuscrit échiquéen du XV siècle. Europe Échecs. Besançon. N. 319-320. juillet - Août, pp 434-435.

<sup>6</sup> CALVO, RICARDO (1991). Birthplace of modern chess. New in Chess, Alkmaar (Holanda). Núm. 7:82-89.

CALVO, RICARDO (1992). Valencia, Geburtsstätte des modernen Schachs. Schach-Journal. Berlin. Núm. 3:34-46.

CALVO, RICARDO & MEISSENBURG, EGBERT (1995). Valencia und die Geburt des neuen Schachs. Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften, Wien, pp 77-89.

<sup>7</sup> BAKKER, IR. GERARD (1983). Damtijdschrift *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, Utrecht, p.



draughts from the alquerque and chess game. Those were good starting points, but still there were remaining dark points in the solidity of this hypothesis.

This is, humbly speaking, the purpose of this book, to seek evidence and to situate Spain in an outstanding place that it naturally deserves. For such effect we chronologically treat the texts studied between 1283 and 1700, gathering more than 950 bibliographical references that can be more easily consulted by future scholars.

From 1986 we maintain the hypothesis that the origin of the game of draughts is a Spanish one and to such effect we have sought answers and evidence for some 10 years. We started on the basis of the fact that the chess game reflects the royal situation of a time. So we can ask ourselves why the queen in the modern chess game has more power than the king. If we study the life of Spanish royalty in the XV century we see that this question is not so difficult to answer. There was, in 1469 a dama in Castille that was married to a future king of Aragon, Fernando. Some years later, in 1475, this dama, Isabel la Católica, was crowned queen with greater effective power than her husband, Fernando. So much, so that when Spain in 1492 was released from the last Moorish outpost in Granada, discovering America and enforcing one sole religion in its territory, it was suddenly justified to use in chess a new queen with more power than her "king". But, concerning the name "dama", what is its origin? We know that the word "domina" was already translated in the XIV century by the French word "dame" in chess manuscripts and it is supposed that in the XV century, due to the influence of the printed books of Jacobus of Cessolis, one began to use frequently in Spain the dama term for the queen in chess. But was it not also due to the idealization of the woman to dama in court poetry, where the supremacy of the dama is one of the characteristics of the frustrated love?

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BAKKER, IR. GERARD (1987). *Damtijdschrift Het Nieuwe Damspel*, Utrecht, p. 42-46.

The new modality of the game in chess was given several names abroad. Thus, we see contemptuous terms as: "alla rabiosa" in the Italian translation and of "dame enragée" in the French translation. In Spain we see a neutral term: "Axedrez de la dama". Motive by which we also believe that France as well as Italy cannot be the country of origin of this new type of chess. Other historians asked themselves how it was possible that this peculiarity of the game could be introduced and maintained in all the European countries. This is not so difficult to explain if we take into account the fact that in 1492 Spain banished some 250.000 Jews from its land, who were distributed all over Europe with all its political and economic influence. Furthermore, the Spanish king Carlos V spent more time away from Spain than within its boundaries in function of the defence of the Spanish hegemony in Europe.

The new "powerful" dama of the chess game would have much to do with the invention of draughts and with the use of this new piece. To such effect we have chronologically treated in this work the bibliographical texts, whose commentaries are mostly translated into Dutch. The original texts are basically Spanish, though we have not forgotten to mention the most notable foreign books in Latin, German, English, French, Italian and Dutch.

The first chapter deals with ancient Egyptian games, since they were considered erroneously by some scholars<sup>8</sup> as precursors of the dama. In the same chapter reference is made to the "Ludus Latrunculorum" game, that was taken by Thomas Hyde<sup>9</sup> as antecedent of the draughts-game. Below are described similar games to the now disappeared "Ludus Latrunculorum", some of those which still exist. Chapter two describes a board game with squares (alternatively white and yellow?) the "Jaldeta", that was forbidden in the XIII century and was no longer practised around the end of the XV century. In chapter three we see ourselves in the Spain of the

<sup>8</sup> WILKINSON, JOHN GARDNER (1878). The manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians. Editie van Samuel Birch, London.

<sup>9</sup> HYDE, THOMAS (1694). De Ludis Orientalibus, Oxford. Deel II.

XV century, being able to observe the general influence of the Queen "Isabel la Católica". We discuss the expulsion of the Jews and the conversion of the Moors to the catholic religion. It was between 1474 and 1492 when the new powerful dama was developed and this time it can be considered as a dormant stage. The definitive beginning originated in 1492 when the queen was at the height of her reign : 1. Conquest of the Morish outpost "Granada"; 2. Discovery of America; 3. Expulsion of the Jews; 4. Loss of power of the nobility due to the administrative reforms.

In chapter 4 the Latin terms "scruporum" and "calculorum" are examined. In the subsequent chapters (5, 6, 7, 8,) Spanish words, which previously were designated to the draughts-game, such as "marro", "marro de punta", "andarraya" and "alquerque" are studied in detail. We demonstrate with bibliographical proofs that "punta" does not mean field, as Branch<sup>10</sup>, Murray<sup>11</sup>, Kruijswijk<sup>12</sup> and Van der Stoep<sup>13</sup> claim, rather "punta" means diagonal. Thus the game "marro de punta" is nothing more than a game with a diagonal direction. The denominations "marro" and "marro de punta" belong to the kingdom of Aragon and those of "andarraya" and "alquerque" to the kingdom of Castille.

The ancient word "trecha", that years afterwards was converted into "treta", is analyzed in chapter 9 of Volume II. Apparently the word "castro" (castles game) had a certain link to draughts in Turkey and Palestinian. In chapter 10 this expression is studied in detail. In chapter 11 of Volume II we extensively analyze the Latin term

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<sup>10</sup> BRANCH, WILLIAM SHELLEY (1911). The history of checkers from the earliest known date. Its evolution and growth, Cheltenham, England. Written for Pittsburg Leader between October 8, 1911 - April 14, 1912.

<sup>11</sup> MURRAY, HAROLD JAMES RUTHVEN (1913). A history of chess, Oxford, p. 399.

MURRAY, HAROLD JAMES RUTHVEN. (1952) A history of Board-games other than chess, Oxford, p. 75.

<sup>12</sup> KRUIJSWIJK, KAREL WENDEL (1966). Algemene historie en bibliografie van het damspel, Den Haag, p. 53.

<sup>13</sup> STOEP, ARIE VAN DER (1984). A history of draughts, Rockanje, p. 81.

"domina" and the word "dama". In the conclusion of this chapter different modalities of draughts in different countries are described. Also, in the following chapter the lost book of Antonio de Torquemada is examined. In 13 a vast study on the book of Juan de Timoneda, printed in 1635, is discussed. According to our investigations some of those texts could date from 1550. It is quite possible that some of the positions of draughts that appear in this book will be similar to those which are described in the book of Torquemada.

The Spanish draughts books between 1547 and 1996 and the first European draughts books are discussed in chapter 14 of Volume II, as well as the Spanish game books of the period of 1283-1700. At the beginning of the XIX century, Jose Paluzie y Lucena established the first Spanish bibliographical study of chess<sup>14</sup>.

In this modest text we do something similar with draughts. To the existing bibliographical lists in other history books about draughts we can add a draughts book of 1792<sup>15</sup> found by Prof. Dr. Juan Torres Fontes<sup>16</sup> and a manuscript of the year 1690 we found in an Andalusian library<sup>17</sup>. Until now a complete relationship among all the Spanish books, referred to the games in the period 1283-1700, had not been established. Thus our investigations could fill that vacuum. In chapter 15 of Volume II hypothesis of other draughts scholars are submitted to discussion and furthermore a point of view is offered on the development of the game of alquerque of 12 up to our current draughts. Much evidence exists to assert that Valencia could be the kingdom of origin of draughts, similar to the powerful dama in the chess game, according to the opinion of the chess scholar Dr. Ricardo Calvo. Finally, the Spanish bibliophile of Spanish draughts books, Victor Cantalapiedra Martin, expounds in

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<sup>14</sup> PALUZIE Y LUCENA, JOSÉ (1912). Primer ensayo de bibliografía Española de ajedrez, Barcelona 1912, pp. 8-11.

<sup>15</sup> GARCIA, JOSEF ANTONIO (1792). Garcia juego de Damas (...), Murcia.

<sup>16</sup> WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1992). Damtijdschrift: *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, Utrecht, p. 87.

<sup>17</sup> CANONIGO, EL (1750?). Libro de Juego de Damas, Granada.

Spanish language, his knowledge of the said books in chapter 16 of Volume II.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book owes its existence to the draughts scholar Rob Jansen of Amsterdam and to his efforts over the periods 1991-1994 and 1996-1997 in providing me with abundant bibliographical material. During my years of investigation I have had the fortune of finding scholars of great prestige: my friend Dr. Ricardo Calvo, a great chess scholar, who provided me with data on his investigations of the origin of modern chess. Without his support and stimulus this book would never have been concluded; Prof. Dr. Juan Torres Fontes (Professor of the University of Murcia in Medieval History) who was so kind as to give me several of his books written on Queen Isabel la Católica and on the XV century, while giving me valuable suggestions on how to continue the investigation; the Dutch draughts scholar, Ir. Gerard Bakker, who kindly made available to me all his publications and photographic material in his draughts magazines; Prof. Dr. Günther G. Bauer of the Institute for the Investigation and the Pedagogy of the Game, created in 1991 by himself, as the fifth scientific institute of the Music and fine arts school, Mozarteum, at Salzburg in Austria, for his support in publishing my previous articles in his books<sup>18</sup> and in encouraging me to continue publishing; the Spanish draughtsbook bibliophile, Victor Cantalapiedra Martín, who taught me to play the Spanish draughtsgame and informed me little by little the secrets of his extensive library, and made available to me a great quantity of bibliographical material and photos. More people have collaborated in the preparation of this book and it is not possible to mention all of

<sup>18</sup> WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1994). Homo Ludens, Der Spielende Mensch IV.

Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule







Mozarteum Salzburg, Salzburg.

WESTERVELD, GOVERT (1996). Homo Ludens. El hombre que juega. Deel 1. Instituto para la Investigación y la Pedagogía del Juego. Salzburg.


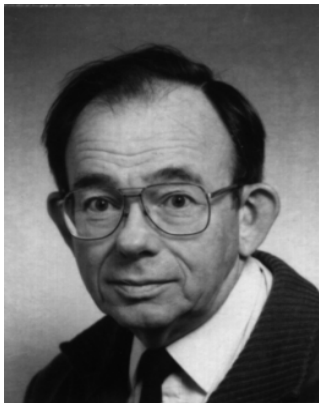
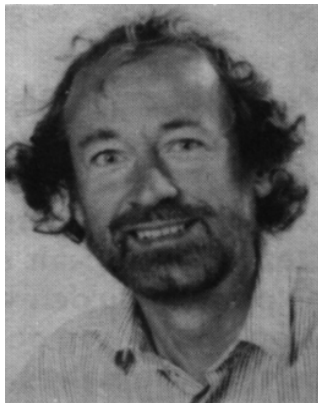
them. Nevertheless, we do not want to forget Prof. Dr. Joachim Petzold (Germany), Mr. Felix Berkovich (U.S.A), the Dutch draughts scholars Karel Wendel Kruijswijk and Drs. Arie van der Stoep, Dr. Pratesi (Italy), Dr. Adriano Chicco (Italy), the Portuguese draughts scholars Dr. Cândido Sena Carneiro and Francisco Henriques, and Flory Navarro Belmonte (Licensed in Medieval History by the University of Murcia). Thanks to all of them!

**Govert Westerveld**


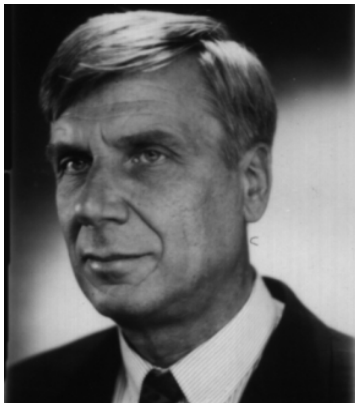

**Historians about draughts**

		
<b>José Brunet y Bellet</b>	<b>Dr. Manuel Cárcelos Sabater</b>	<b>William Shelley Branch</b>
		
<b>Edward B. Hanes</b>	<b>Godefridus Laurentius Gortmans</b>	<b>Harold James Ruthven Murray</b>

**Historians about draughts**

		
<b>Karel Wendel Kruijswijk</b>	<b>Ir. Gerard Bakker</b>	<b>Dr. Arie van der Stoep</b>

		
<b>Dr. Franco Pratesi</b>	<b>Rob Jansen</b>	<b>Dr. Govert Westerveld</b>

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Calendar sheet of 1678



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## Introduction.

Since 1987 we have defended in articles that the Spanish queen Isabella I of Castile (Isabel la Católica) was the new chess queen (dama) on the chessboard. Other publications were in 1990, 1994, 1997, and 2004. Now in 2015 we also defend that the new bishop on the chessboard was created at the same time as the new queen. The bishop in question was known at that time in Spain as the third monarch.

In 1997 we published in the Dutch<sup>19</sup> Language:

De invloed van de Spaanse koningin Isabel la Catolica op de nieuwe sterke dame in de oorsprong van het dam- en moderne schaakspel; Spaanse literatuur, jaren: 1283-1700

Translation:

The influence of the queen Isabel la Catolica on the new powerful dama in the origin of the draughts and modern chess game. Spanish literature, 1283-1700.

And of course, Marilyn Yalom studied our book during her visit to the National Library in The Hague (Holland) before she wrote *Birth of the Chess Queen* in 2004. In her book one cannot see that in 1987, 1990, and 1994 we already published material about Isabel la Catolica (Isabel I of Castile) being the new powerful dama or chess queen on the chessboard<sup>20</sup>. In other words we can state here that we have been

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<sup>19</sup> (1997). De invloed van de Spaanse koningin Isabel la Catolica op de nieuwe sterke dame in de oorsprong van het dam- en moderne schaakspel; Spaanse literatuur, jaren: 1283-1700. In collaboration with Rob Jansen, Beniel (Spain). ISBN 84-605-6372-3 - 329 pages.

<sup>20</sup> (1987) Dutch Draughts Magazine Het Nieuwe Damspel, p. 71.

(1990) Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero. Volume I. Editor Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, S.A. (PPU S.A.) – Barcelona. ISBN 84-7665-697-0

(1994) Historia de la nueva dama poderosa en el juego de Ajedrez y Damas. (History of the New Powerful Queen in the Game of Chess and Draughts), pp. 103-225. Homo Ludens: Der spielende Mensch IV, Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule "Mozarteum" - Salzburg.

studying Spanish history and its chess literature for over 30 years. Since 2003 we have also known the development of the new bishop in chess. Now in 2015 we also defend by means of our book *The Birth of a New Bishop in Chess* the fact that the new bishop on the chessboard was created at the same time as the new queen. The bishop in question was known in Spain at the time as the third monarch.

The surname Lucena had much to do with the development of a new chess queen and seeing this fact we have lately written various books of which the chronological<sup>21</sup> order should be taken into account.

Once again Dr. Ricardo Calvo encouraged José Antonio Garzón Roger to contact and work with me. After the death of our mutual friend in 2002 we started working together and this resulted in additional chapters to the book already published in 1997. The new book that we finished in 2004 is entitled<sup>22</sup>

La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas

Translation:

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Herausgegeben von Prof. Mag. Dr. Günther C. Bauer.

(1994) Homo Ludens, Der Spielende Mensch IV. Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule Mozarteum Salzburg, Salzburg.

<sup>21</sup> (2015) The Ambassador Juan Ramírez de Lucena, the father of the chessbook writer Lucena. 226 pages. ISBN: 978-1-326-37728-1

(2015) The Training of Isabella I of Castile as the Virgin Mary by Churchman Martin de Cordoba in 1468. The Association of the Virgin Mary with the French Chess Piece "Dame" 172 pages.

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(2015) The Poem Scachs d'amor (1475). First Text of Modern Chess. - 144 pages.

ISBN: 978-1-326-37491-4

(2015) The Birth of a New Bishop in Chess - 172 pages.

ISBN: 978-1-326-37044-2

<sup>22</sup> (2004) La reina Isabel la Católica: su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna del ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas. Edition of the Generalitat Valenciana. Conselleria de Cultura, Educació i Esport. Secretaria Autònoma de Cultura, Valencia.

Queen Isabella I of Castile, her reflection on the powerful lady of Valencia, the birthplace of modern chess and origin of checkers.

The revised edition of our book of 1997 and that one of 2004 resulted in three volumes, of which the second volume currently is in creation.

### **My hypothesis about Isabella of Castile**

Already in the eighties when I published many English articles in the Dutch draughts magazine *Het Nieuwe Damspel* I was convinced about the fact that the new powerful Dama in the draughts/checkers and chess game had to do with the Spanish Queen Isabella of Castile. Much more research was needed in this field, but I wanted to be the first with my hypothesis and idea. For that reason I instructed Mr. Jesús Silvente to make a good drawing of Isabella in front of a Spanish draughts board. This drawing was published in 1990 in my first Spanish draughts book<sup>23</sup> written with the help of Mrs. Florentina Navarro Belmonte, who was licensed in the medieval history and in charge of revision of my Spanish texts. The title in the drawing “La Reina de las Damas” (The Queen of the Damas) does not produce misunderstandings. According to my research she was the woman of the two damas - one of chess and one of the Spanish draughts game. Isabella of Castile was more important than the King and the central figure with the dama in chess and with the dama in the draughts game. Years later Van der Stoep<sup>24</sup> erroneously informs his readers in his book of 2005 that Calvo wrote about Isabella of Castile in 1990 with regards to the powerful lady in chess, but this is not correct, since Calvo<sup>25</sup> wrote his first English article in 1991 and not in 1990 as I did<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> **NAVARRO BELMONTE, Florentina & WESTERVELD, Govert** (1990) *Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero*. Tomo I. Editor Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, S.A. (PPU S.A.) – Barcelona. ISBN 84-7665-697-0

<sup>24</sup> **STOEP, Arie van der** (2005) *Draughts in relation to chess and Alquerque*, p. 20

. Van der Stoep refers only to my work of 1997 with respect to Isabella of Castile, forgetting to inform about my articles from 1987<sup>27</sup>, 1988<sup>28</sup>, my draughts book of 1990, and my article from 1994<sup>29</sup>. On the other hand he mentions my book of 2004<sup>30</sup> and does not mention the book of Ricardo Calvo<sup>31</sup>. It is necessary to point this out, because I know from experience that there are always deceivers who intend to take the credit for others.

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<sup>25</sup> **CALVO, Ricardo** (1991) Valencia, Birthplace of modern chess. In: New in chess, N° 7, pp. 82-87 and 89

<sup>26</sup> **NAVARRO BELMONTE, Florentina & WESTERVELD, Govert** (1990) Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero. Tomo I. Editor Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, S.A. (PPU S.A.) – Barcelona. ISBN 84-7665-697-0

<sup>27</sup> **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1987) Dutch draughts magazine *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, p. 71. I said: “How was it possible that the dama (queen) suddenly received such a high value in chess and dama? We do not know the reason, but we should bear in mind that many Spaniards think of Isabella as their greatest ruler”. As from 1987 I was looking for proofs for my hypothesis.

<sup>28</sup> **WESTERVELD, GOVERT** (1988) Dutch draughts magazine *Het Nieuwe Damspel*, p. 29. Why was Isabella of Castile such an important person? She convinced her husband to provide money to Columbus to discover the New World. She persuaded her husband of the need of one religion, to baptize or expel the Jews and to conquer Granada. This queen on horseback was visiting her soldiers throughout their territory. She was really more a general than a Queen and in any case a more important figure than her husband, King Ferdinand.

<sup>29</sup> **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1994) Historia de la nueva dama poderosa en el juego de Ajedrez y Damas. (History of the new powerful Queen in the game of chess and draughts), pages 103-124. Homo Ludens: Der spielende Mensch IV, Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule "Mozarteum" - Salzburg. Herausgegeben von Prof. Mag. Dr. Günther C. Bauer

<sup>30</sup> **WESTERVELD, Govert** (2004) La reina Isabel la Católica, su reflejo en la dama poderosa de Valencia, cuna de ajedrez moderno y origen del juego de damas. In collaboration with José Antonio Garzón Roger, Valencia. Generalidad Valenciana, Secretaria Autonómica de Cultura

<sup>31</sup> **CALVO, RICARDO** (1999) El Poema scachs d'amor (siglo XV). First preserved text about modern chess. Analysis and comments by Ricardo Calvo. Editorial Jaque XXI, S.L. – Madrid, with prologue by José Antonio Garzón Roger, p. 65

The two chess books written in 1495 by Francesch Vicent in Valencia and in 1497 by Lucena in Salamanca showing the new chess game were part of the proof of that. On the other hand the first Spanish draughts books were written in 1547, 1591, 1591, 1635, and 1650. Finally, after more than a hundred years we see appear the first draughts book in France written by the engineer Mallet in 1668. Given the fact that Spain had a clear lead in knowledge of the draughts and chess game over its nearest rival France it was time to change the history of the draughts and chess game. Researchers such as the famous Englishman and board game specialist Harold James Ruthven Murray, the Dutchman Karel Wendel Kruijswijk, and Dr. Arie van der Stoep believed only in France being the inventor of the draughts/checkers game. Save to say the chess game, which practically everybody believed that was invented in France or Italy.

However, I did not consider it to be a true reflection of the real situation. So the first step in my protest was the simple drawing of Queen Isabella of Castile as the Queen of the Damas, because the Dama in the draughts game and the Dama in the chess game completely changed these two games. Isabella of Castile (Isabel la Católica) was the cause of the chess game changing completely and it was her influence that made people in Valencia invent the draughts/checkers game.

Suddenly something was happening in the chess world too, because Dr. Ricardo Calvo, a famous chess historian, also dared to state the following in one of his explosive articles in 1991<sup>32</sup>:

The new moves of the queen coexist with literary activities in which the feminine figure acquires new preeminence, as was evident in literary contests honouring the Virgin. At the same time a powerful queen, Isabella of Castile, was playing a prominent political role esteemed to be at least as important as that of her husband Ferdinand of Aragon. The decision of changing the rules of movement of the old medieval queen into the new powerful queen of modern chess may be explicable in this cultural atmosphere, though this point

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<sup>32</sup> **CALVO, Ricardo** (1991) France, Birthplace in modern chess. In: New in chess, N° 7, pp. 82-87 and 89



is, and will remain, a matter of speculation.



A drawing in my Draughts book of 1990

But to me Calvo's idea was only based on intuition as a result of long research and proofs still had to be given. Our friendship dates from 1991 and in 1992 he wrote a short introduction in my second draughts book, of which I only translate part of my text relating to Queen Isabella of Castile, because we both were feeling her presence in the chess and draughts games<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> WESTERVELD, Govert (1992) Las Damas: Ciencia sobre un tablero. Tomo II, Beniel, p. 7

The origins of the game of checkers (draughts) and its fascinating historical and cultural context are still partially unveiled. Some of these veils hint at yet a very specific backdrop: The second half of the fifteenth century and the figure of Queen as Isabella of Castile, both on the chessboard as being the greatest one in politics, printed a deep mark that has served as a mould to different ideas engendered in her environment. The game consists of jumping over squares and lines on a board or limits of a human geography hitherto regarded as fixed. It is almost immaterial, both mounted. To the spirits of that time there existed an endless transformative potential at the edges of the explored things, a way without turning back leading to the promotion of each human or symbolic piece who dared to take the edge of the frame of established moves.

My next Spanish article<sup>34</sup> was in 1994 to defend the position of Isabella of Castile. I was invited in 1993 by Dr. Ricardo Calvo to visit the Congress of chess historians of Initiative Group Königstein (IGK) in Amsterdam.



**Prof. Mag. Dr. Günther C. Bauer**

There I met in November 1993 the best chess historian in Europe in the Max Euwe-Centrum, and also Professor Günther Bauer from

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<sup>34</sup> **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1994) Historia de la nueva dama poderosa en el juego de Ajedrez y Damas. (History of the new powerful Queen in the game of chess and draught), pages 103-124. Homo Ludens: Der spielende Mensch IV, Internationale Beiträge des Institutes für Spielforschung und Spielpädagogik an der Hochschule "Mozarteum" - Salzburg. Herausgegeben von Prof. Mag. Dr. Günther C. Bauer

Salzburg who invited me to write an article about the history of draughts and queen Isabella of Castile in his book of 1994. Thereafter I spent some years writing my hypothesis about Isabella of Castile<sup>35</sup> by means of my book in 1997 in Dutch. Although I was invited several times to participate in the Congress of the Group Königstein I decided not to participate, because I wanted to maintain my condition of independent researcher. Although I tried to win Ricardo Calvo over my idea of Isabella of Castile, I observed that Calvo did not exploit the idea of Isabella of Castile (in which he also believed) further, and this was my feeling about opposition of the Initiative Group Königstein Congress that did not believe in the hypothesis of Isabel la Católica. This is normal, because we may consider the Initiative Group Königstein as a select group of chess historians, and among them we find some of the best chess historians in the world, and things need time. We see the same thing in Spanish universities, where the professors continue using the name of Luis de Lucena as that of the author of a chess book of 1497, while I have told them several times that this name is not correct and should be simply “Lucena”.

On the other hand I also informed them that the first draughts book written in Valencia in 1547 never could have been Antonio de Torquemada's and should be Juan de Timoneda's. They do not believe that and continue using Antonio de Torquemada. *Anyone who has spent decades in cloisters and universities can gauge the amount of routine and pusillanimity which thrives on them* are the words of a very good friend of mine, professor emeritus and writer of more than 70 books based on historical research. Things need time.

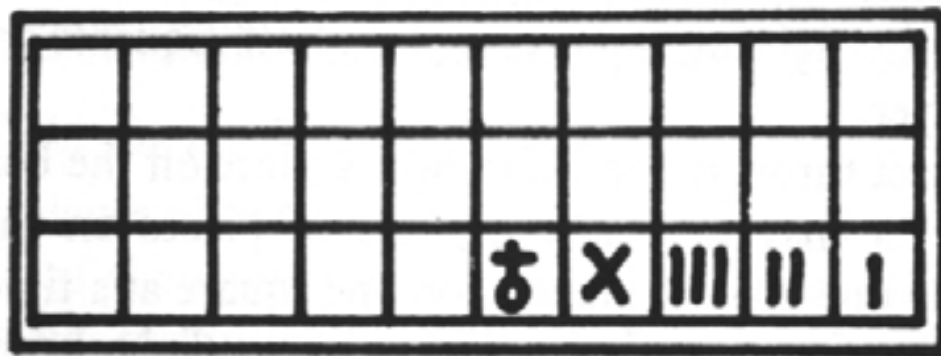
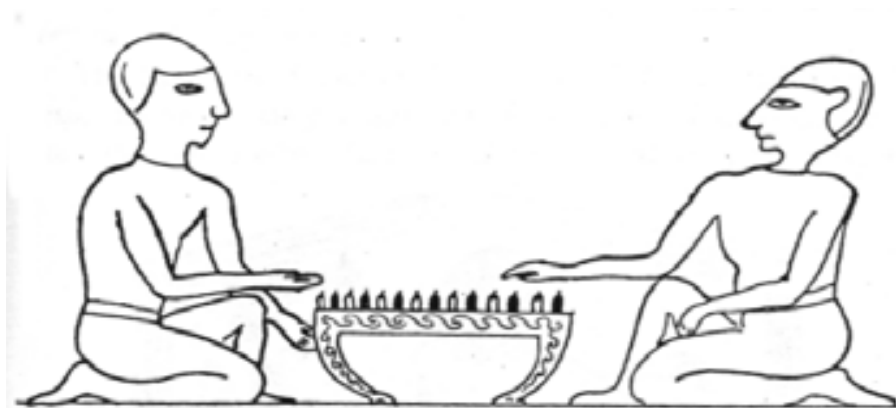
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<sup>35</sup> **WESTERVELD, Govert** (1997), La influencia de la reina Isabel la Católica sobre la nueva dama poderosa en el origen del juego de las damas y el ajedrez moderno. En colaboración con Rob Jansen, Amsterdam. (Prólogo de Dr. Ricardo Calvo y Prof. Dr. Juan Torres Fontes). Editor Govert Westerveld, Beniel. ISBN 84-605-6372-3

# 1. LUDUS LATRUNCULORUM

## THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN GAMES

Ancient Egyptian game boxes were often qualified (Birch 1870, deel 9:256-270; Falkener, 1892:9-111) as draughts, because there was a board with squares and uniform pieces. As a result of that terms like “Jeu de Dames” and “Draughts” were used incorrectly.

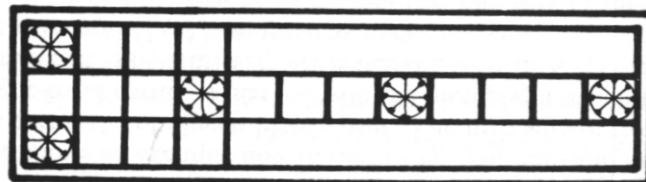
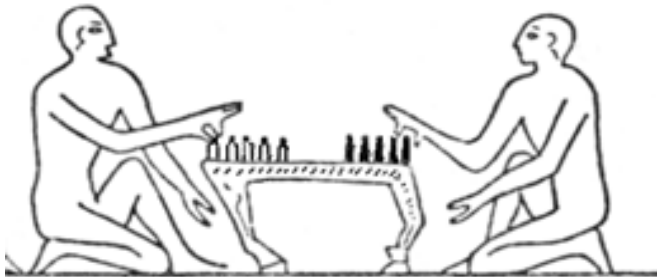


The Senet board game

The games played in Egypt were probably Senet, Han and Tau, which last game Lamer (1927:1908) considered as a precursor of the Greek and Latin mind game.



**Senet piece**



**The Tau board game**

Limbrey (1913) Pieper (1909), Wiedemann (1897), Towry (1902, vol. 24:261-263), Nash (1902, vol. 24:341-348) and Wilkinson (1878, vol.2:55-60) have also written about the Egyptian board games, but these games have nothing to do with the draughts. Little is known about the Han game and perhaps this game is still played in Nigeria (Murray, 1952:14).

## THE ANCIENT GREEK GAMES

The ancient Greek games were described by the contemporaries Pollux (1608) and Suetonius (1860). The game diagrammismos (grammai) appears to be the same as the Roman board game duodecim scripta (Austin 1940, vol. 14:257-271).

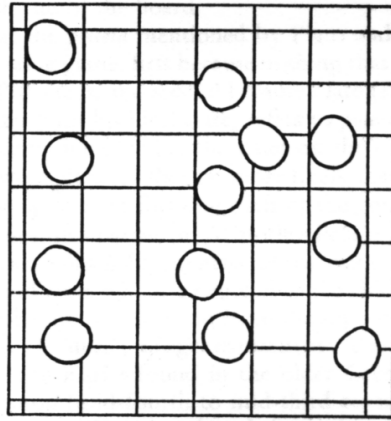


**Achilles and Ajax are playing five lines**

The image, that appears on a Greek vase, dates from the 7th century BC and is from the Etruscan culture, and is still visible in Rome in the Vatican Museum *Gregoriano Etrusco* (Arias, 1960). The two soldiers are playing five lines (pente grammai), as can be seen from the depiction of the gaming board on a vase in the museum in Brussels. Murray states that the game petteia (polis) is nothing else than the Roman game Ludus Latrunculorum (Murray, 1952:27,34). However, petteia is not the name of a game but a generic Greek term indicating “board game” that derives from the word *pessos* = stone, gaming piece. Hesychius speaks about diagrammismos, a game with 60 stones, which Eustathius confirms in the 12th century, but Murray (1952:27) believed more in an error on the part of Hesychius.



**Athenian "Terracotta Group"**



**Board Position  
"Terracotta Group"**

The game of polis is described by Pollux (1608) and appears to be a game on a grid with uniform pieces called dogs, and this game was the earlier Greek version of the Roman latrunculi. The intention is to block the enemy pieces and capture them by trapping. Also in the Seega game (Murray, 1952:54) there are pieces called dogs (kelb, pl. Kilâb).

Little game material has been found in Greece. The earlier indicated drawing of the Athenian terracotta group appears in Richter (1887) and was first described by Bursian (1855:55). It is further discussed by Michaelis (1863:37-43) and Blümner (1885:354-355). Other authors who wrote about the Greek games were Coleridge (1860), Dumont (1870), Becker (1840, deel 1:481-486), André (1984), Severino (1690), Meurs (1619; 1622), Wayte (1901, volume 2:11-13), and Lafaye (1904, volume 3:992-995).

## THE ANCIENT ROMAN GAMES

Generally speaking the Romans knew four board games, namely Alea (Cardano, 1663), Ludus Duodecim Scripta, Ludus Latrunculorum, and a game without a name described by the poet Ovid, which name was not handed down, but the game had to do with the little mill.

### **Duodecim Scripta**

Some knowledge of the games from Roman times is important to us, because it happens too often that a Roman board game is mistaken for a draughts game and that is not correct. On the other hand we see appear on the Internet nice irresponsible inventions of other presumed Roman games and in this case I prefer to follow the board game specialist in Greek and Roman Games Dr. Ulrich Schädler:

What is written about the board games *XII scripta*, the presumed game *tabula*, and a game the author calls “felix sex” which has never existed is a completely misleading invention of the author without any idea of what serious research into Roman board games has brought to light (Schädler, 1995 and 1998). The boards of the game the author calls “felix sex” are simply boards for *XII scripta* and *alea*.

The reconstruction of ancient games is a very complicated subject where archaeological evidence, literary sources in Greek and Latin, and knowledge of general mechanisms of board games must be combined. It is not enough to study the English books, because other relevant studies should also be taken into account (Lamer, 1927: 2, col. 1900-2029).

So Caro (1624: 202-203) observes that San Isidoro (lib. XVIII, cap. 67) already distinguishes two types of pieces; those of the damas (Kings, Queens) as Vagues (vagi) and those of the pawns as Ordinaries (ordinarii). Caro is wrong here, because San Isidoro’s reference to the pieces has nothing to do with draughts. The conscious text of San Isidoro has to do with the Duodecim Scripta and the related Alea game



(Austin, nov. 1934, feb. 1935, section 4, p. 76). Avigliano made the same mistake centuries later (1927: 1-39).

### **Ludus Latrunculorum (Latrunculi).**

The game of Ludus Latrunculorum, also called Latrunculi, is of importance to us. Some authors, such as Hyde (1694b: Volume II), considered this erroneously to be a draughts game. Caylus (1761, IV: 264) claims that the Romans played on a board with alternating white and black squares, which was accepted by Becq de Fouquières (1869:432). This is not correct since in ancient Rome the checkering of game boards was unknown.

According to Murray (1952:32). Latrunculi has nothing to do with draughts. Gortmans (1926: 119-120; 153, 154, 172) already came to this conclusion in his articles.



**Draughts historian Godefridus Laurentius Gortmans  
(1894-1956)**

Several attempts to reach a clear gameplay for the Ludus Latrunculorum had been undertaken by Becq de Fouquières (1869), Falkener (1892), Murray (1952), Bell (1979), Schmitt (1977), and lately Schädler (1994:47-67).

The first trace to Ludus Latrunculorum leads to Marcus Terentius Varro (116-27 BC). The rules are incompletely represented by Ovid, Martial, Seneca and the author of the poem Laus Pisonis. Roma Ludens (Vaterlein, 1976) describes which famous Romans practiced the board game.

## **RULES OF LUDUS LATRUNCULORUM**

Here are some incomplete rules on the basis of what Bakker (1980-193) wrote in the *Vacature* and of which the texts also were a matter of study by Hyde (1694b, Vol. II).

### **Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovide, *Ars Amatorio* III, 357/360):**

Cautaque, non stulte, latronum proelia ludat, unus cum gemino calculus hoste perit, bellatorque sua prensus sine compare bellat, aemulus et coeptum saepe recurrit iter.

#### **Translation:**

Play not imprudently in the artful combat of the Little Robbers, an isolated soldier must perish if he attacks two enemies at once. And a warrior wars without his companion who's been taken, and a rival often has to return the way he began.

### **Publius Ovidius Naso (Ovide, *Tristia* 2, 477-480):**

...discolor ut recto grassetur limite miles, cum medius gemino calculus hoste perit; ut bellare sequens sciat et revocare priorem nec tuto fugiens incommitatus eat.

#### **Translation:**

... your soldiers, of different colors, must follow closely the straight line, and when there is a risk of losing a piece trapped between two enemies, the art is to support the first piece and to ensure that his retirement could be done safely and accompanied.

One can move the pieces forward and backward. A piece too far advanced can return with the help of another own piece.



**Marcus Valerius Martialis**

**Marcus Valerius Martialis: (Martialis, Epigrammata 14-17, 2):**

Hac mihi bis seno numeratur tessera puncto: calculus hic gemino discolor  
hoste perit.

**Translation:**

On one side (of the board) the dices give me double sixes; on the other side  
the piece of different colour is lost by double enemies.

Each side has pieces of a different color.

In an anonymous poem, that survives under the name of "Laus Pisonis", the party game of the Roman statesman Gaius Calpurnius was mentioned (Junius, 1556):

Te si forte iuvat studiorum pondere fessum, non languere tamen, lususque  
movere per artem: callidiore modo tabula variatur aperta calculus, et vitreo  
peraguntur milite bella: ut niveus nigros, nunc et niger alliget albos.

**Translation:**

If you please sometimes, when weary with the weight of studies, to be  
nevertheless not inactive but to play games of skill, then on the open board in  
more cunning fashion a piece is moved into different positions and the war is

waged to a finish with glass soldiers, so that white blocks the black pieces, and black blocks the white.

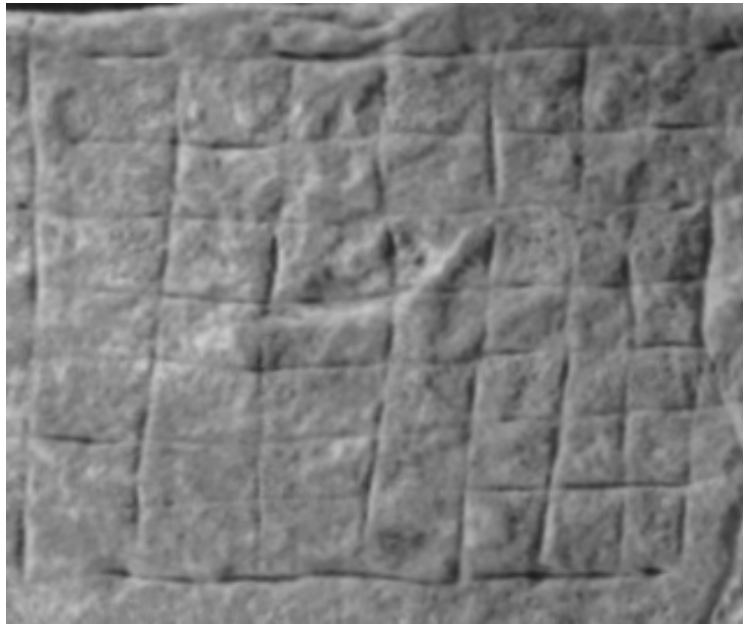
Gladys Martin (1917) even wrote a thesis on *Laus Pisonis* stating that the date of this poem can clearly be no later than 65 A.D.

Sed tibi quis non terga dedit? quis te duce cessit calculus? aut quis non periturus perdidit hostem? Mille modis acies tua dimicat: ille petentem, dum fugit, ipse rapit: longo venit ille recessu, qui stetit in speculis: hic se committere rixae audet, et in praedam venientem decipit hostem. Ancipites subit ille moras, similisque ligato obligat ipse duos: hic ad maiora movetur, ut citus ecfracta prorumpat in agmina mandra, clausaque deiecto populetur moenia vallo. Interea sectis quamvis acerrima surgant proelia militibus; plena tamen ipse phalange; aut etiam pauco spoliata milite, vincis, et tibi captiva resonat manus utraque turba.

**Translation: (Wight, 1934).**

But what player has not retreated before you? Or what piece before capture has not reduced the enemy? In a thousand ways your army fights: one piece, as it retreats, itself captures its pursuer: a reserve piece, standing on the alert, comes from its distant retreat- this one dares to join the fray and cheats the enemy coming for his spoil. Another piece submits to risky delays and, seemingly checked, itself checks two more: this one moves towards higher results, so that, quickly played and breaking the opponent's defensive line, it may burst out on his forces and, when the rampart is down, devastate the enclosed city. Meanwhile, however fierce rises the conflict among the men in their divided ranks, still you win with your phalanx intact or deprived of only a few men, and both your hands rattle with the crowd of pieces you have taken.

We observe that white and black glass pieces are used. Captured pieces are removed from the board and the pieces should be kept together in lines. With regards to the other rules of the game we know that archaeological research has confirmed that uniform pieces were used (Murray 1952:33) and a surrounded piece could not be removed immediately from the board (Becq de Fouquières, 1869:432). The pieces are brought one by one on the board (Schädler, 1994: 47-67) and the game *Ludus Latrunculorum* is quite similar to the Seega game (Bell, 1979:82-87). The game was played by two people on a board on which lines were drawn to obtain a certain number of playing fields.



**Stone with Latrunculi squares**

Further archaeological research has shown that the game was not played with an exact number of squares. Boards were found (Murray, 1952:33) that had 7x7, 7x8, 8x8, 9x9, 9x10, and even fields of 10x13.

The game of Ludus Latrunculorum has been discussed in the works of Anonymous (1647), Mommeian (1560 and 1847:454-465), Clerc (1687:86-94), Averani (1743: Vol. 7:461-573), and Tilley (1892:335-336). Hieronymus (Girolanus) Cardanus (1557) also called Cardan or Cardano, wrote a book using the title *The Ludus Latrunculorum*, but this work has been lost (Calvo, 1991). This famous Italian scholar was so addicted to the game that at some point in his life he had to sell all furniture and his wife's jewelry.

### **Games derivative of Ludus Latronculorum**

It is generally accepted that the game of Ludus Latrunculorum is known nowhere and extinct. But this seems a premature conclusion, a game that was earlier played by millions of people in many countries cannot just die without leaving a trace. The game probably still exists

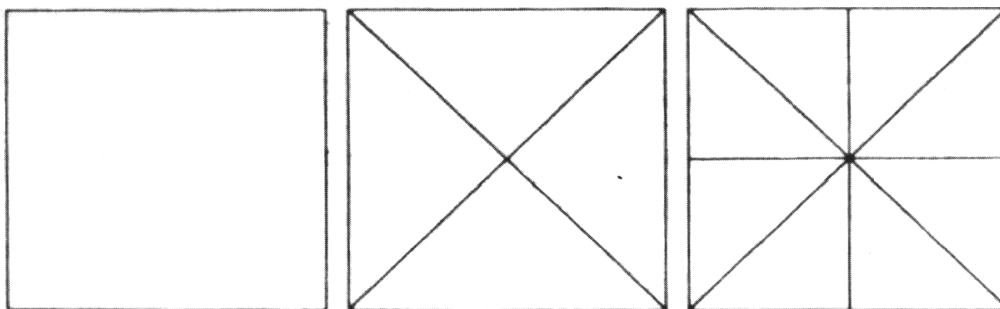
under a different name or with slight modifications in countries where a traditional culture reigns. Various games, which we still know today, emerged from the Roman strategy game. The course and the capture were derived from this game. Primitive tribes did not have boards and were obliged to draw lines in the sand with sticks. This becomes clear when we see later on how the Bataks draw their chessboard. Therefore a closer look at the games that had to do with the Roman games can give us some more information. In this sense we are very grateful to Jansen who sought this information in The Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden and in the Library of the Teyler Museum in Haarlem. Jansen made a study of six games:

- **Papan Chator** (Jansen, 1994, Issue 34:22-23)
- **Apit-Sodok** (Jansen, 1992, Issue 23:18-19)
- **Mak-Yeak** (Jansen, 1992, Issue 23: 19)
- **Gâla** (Jansen, 1992, Issue 25:22-23)
- **Tafl-Hnefatafl**
- **Seega**

## PAPAN CHATOR, THE SECRET OF THE BATAKS.

In the second half of the 19th century the interior of Central and North Sumatra was still terra incognita. A single Chinese or Malay trader never went on an expedition. The Bataks fully realized the threat posed by the Dutch authorities in the south and refused to receive the Europeans in a friendly manner. Therefore people only slowly gained knowledge about this people. The phenomenon of cannibalism was not uncommon in these parts, but on the other hand the writing already was very well known (historical narratives which were written on the tree bark and stores in tubes).

In 1904 appeared a remarkable book written by Armin von Oefele about another aspect of life there. The German ethnologist expressed his surprise over the fact that nature people practiced a culture game. In 1930 Max Euwe encountered at first hand during his Indian tour how strong the Bataks were at playing chess. He had to allow many draws.



1.

2. Board game for  
throwing coins

3. Three men's  
Morris

**Board Phase 2:** suitable for playing a Medieval game “France le Carreau” (game of throwing coins).

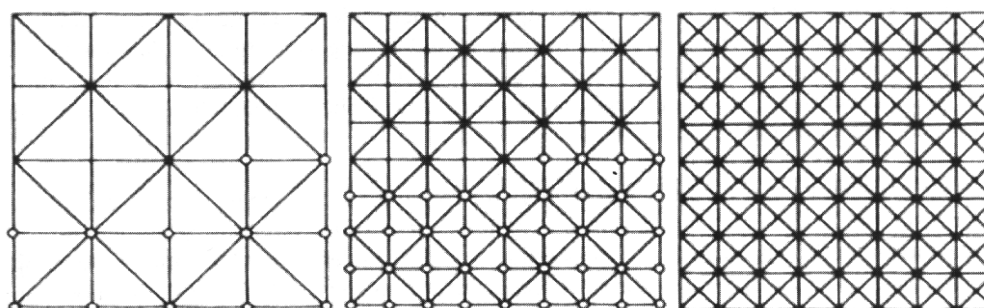
**Board Phase 3:** suitable for playing Alquerque-3 on the small board for the Mill game. (Three men's Morris or Tic-tac-toe) Schliemann (1875) found this drawing in the ruins of Troya

At least 2000 years history is becoming visible when one looks at how the Bataks drew their chessboard.

**(Von Oefele 1904:17):** “Die 64 Felder des Spielplanes sind bei den Batakern nicht der Farbe nach unterschieden sondern mit Hilfe von Linien in ein Bret eingeritzt. Durch jedes Feld ziehen sich 2 Diagonalen, deren Bedeutung unbekannt bleibt, wenn man nicht zugesehen hat, wie der Bataker sein Brett herstellt. Er macht dies nämlich auf regelrecht mathematischen Wege. Zuerst errichtet er das Quadrat, das die Felder enthalten soll. In diesem zieht er die Diagonalen, worauf in deren Schnittpunkten die beiden Höhen gefällt werden, so dass nun das große Quadrat in 4 gleiche Quadrate geteilt ist. Diese 4 Quadrate teilt er hierauf einzeln auf dieselbe Weise wieder in 4 kleinere. Damit zeigt das Brett schon 16 Quadrate. Die Vierteilung findet nun noch einmal statt, womit die Zahl 64 erreicht ist. Der Symmetrie halber werden die Diagonalen durchgezogen. (Schachbrett = Papan Chator)”.

### **Translation:**

The 64 spaces of the game plan of the Bataks are not coloured, but distinguished by using lines on a board. Through each field they draw two diagonals, of which the significance remains unknown, if you are not watching how the Batak manufactures his board. He does this in fact in a downright mathematical way. First he builds the square that should include the fields. On it he draws the diagonals, which are taken at the intersections of the two heights, so that now the large square has been divided into 4 equal squares. Then he shares these four squares individually on the same way again into 4 smaller ones. In this way the board now shows 16 squares. The fourfold division is now taking place again, bringing the number to 64. For the sake of symmetry the diagonals are drawn. (Checkerboard = Papan Chator).



**4. Standard  
Alquerque-board**

**5. Alquerque  
quadruple-board**

**6. Papan Chator  
(Chaturanga) board**



**Board Phase 4:** suitable for playing the game of Alquerque-12. (The Bataks called this game *Ersêser* or *Si tampullen*).

**Board Phase 5:** for playing alquerque with 40 pieces. (The neighbours of the Bataks, the Achinese, play the tiger game with 40 tigers on this board).

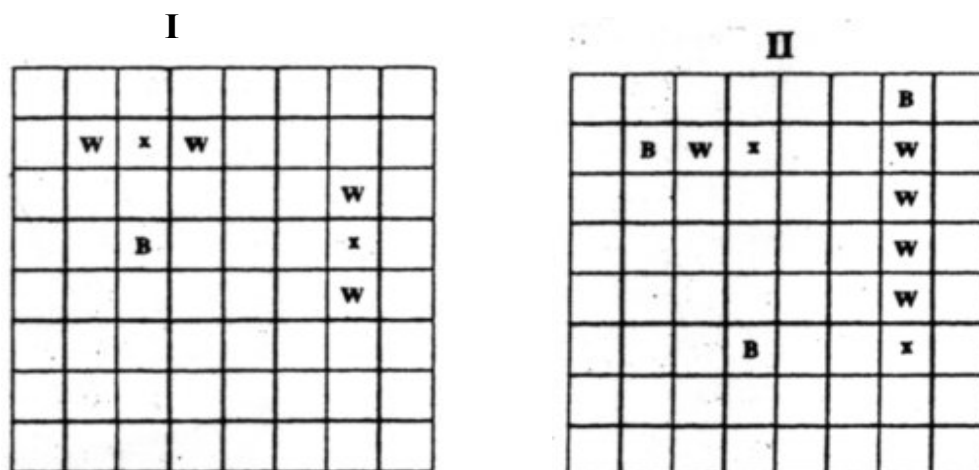
**Board Phase 6:** suitable for playing the Batak chess game and it is almost certainly an alquerque game with probably 72 pieces.

It is extremely remarkable that this last board type is found among the Roman finds of game boards in England (Bushe-Fox, 1928). There they found namely a board of this type with 8 squares on one side and 5 squares on the other side (8x5 squares). The statement of the 8x8 square board as indicated by Murray (1952:33) and Bell is inaccurate according to Schadler (1994: 47-67).

In Sumatra, Malaya, Thailand, and Burma the Chaturanga game still survives. Men play it alongside modern chess, like the old type of games similar to draughts which are played alongside modern draughts.

## APIT SODOK, A ROMAN BOARD GAME?

According Samusah (1932:138-140), this Malay game is played as follows:



This game is played on a draughtsboard by 2 players. There are 16 pieces, all of equal value; and these are arranged in 2 rows as in chess. Pieces can be moved backwards, forwards and sideways (but not diagonally) as many squares as are required, players move the opponent's pieces **sodo**. (moving away). This can be done:

- a. by **sodo**
- b. by **apit**.

**a. SODO.** If 2 pieces, say of white, are in the same straight line with an empty place between them, a black can move a piece on to the empty square and remove the white pieces on either side. In figure I if B moves to either place marked x, he can remove the 2 white pieces.

**b. APIT.** If one or more pieces are enclosed by an opponent's pieces, one opponent's piece on either side whether from front and back, or right and left, the piece or pieces can be removed. In figure II and III (1): if B moves his piece to either square marked x, the white piece or pieces can be taken.

**III (a)**

	B						
	W						
	W						
	x	W	B				
	B					B	B
						B	W

**IV (a)**

		B					
		W					
	W	x	W				
		B		B	W	x	B

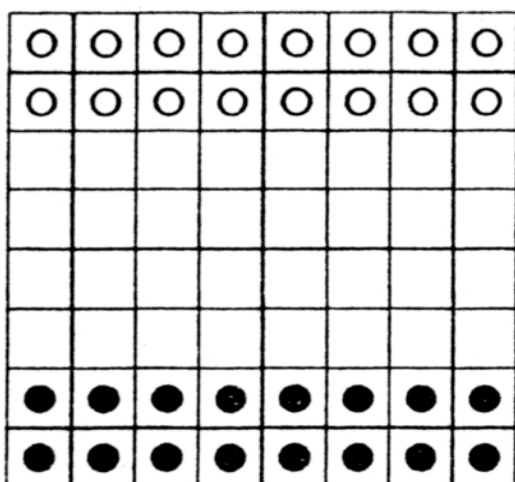
**III (b)****IV (b)**

If the pieces are deliberately placed in the position of apit by one side, the other side cannot take it from them until one of the enclosing pieces has been moved. In **IV (b)**: if **W.** moves to the square marked **x**, **B.** cannot remove the pieces until one of the **B.** enclosing pieces has been moved away and back. Pieces can be removed by sodo and by apit if the arrangement of the enemy's pieces permits as in fig. **IV (a)**. A piece enclosed in a corner as **W.** in fig. **III (b)** cannot be taken.

Wilkinson (1915:57), Kool (1923:77) and Hervey (1933, 33:295) wrote about this game, too.

## MAK-YAEK

In the translation by Mrs. P. Suwannaphoom of the draughts part of the Game Encyclopedia (1950) of Thailand, we read the following:



This is a mind game, where, by shifting of the own pieces, one always attempts to create a situation, where the opponent in the side can be attacked, in order to capture per shift the maximum number of pieces.

Draw to begin 64 squares (as in the drawing). Both players use 16 pieces each.

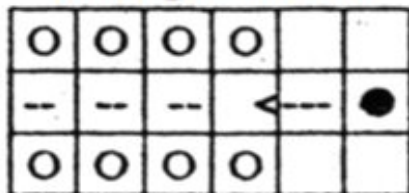
In order to easily distinguish the pieces different colors are used. The pieces on the sides of the players are put on the squares. After each game the colors of the players are changed.

The moves: shift straight across the squares, forward, backward, left, or right. Each move may have a length of more than one square. The exact number of squares is not important (but there should not be other pieces on those squares).

**The capture:** There are 3 ways, **saturated capture**, **unsaturated capture**, and **color-changing capture**. This depends on the agreements that the players have made at the beginning of the game.

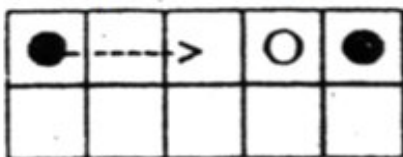
**Saturated capture** means that, during the turn of capture, all pieces might be captured that can be captured, in a path that the opponent has opened. (in other words, several consecutive captures).

### The saturated capture

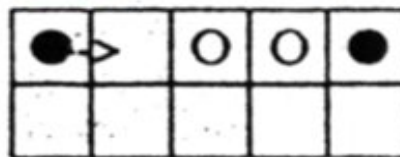


The manner  
of capture

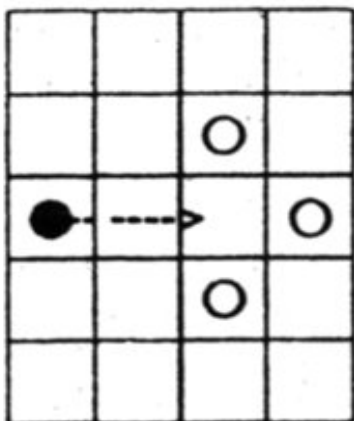
### Two pieces flanking one



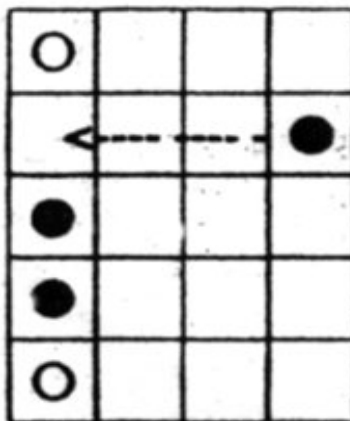
### Two pieces flanking two



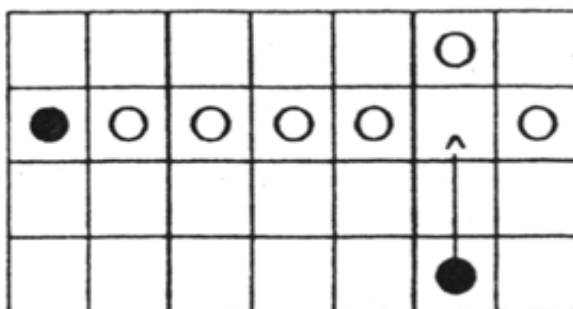
### One move and capture of 3 pieces



### Three pieces displace two



### The manner of capture



**Unsaturated capture** means that one can capture only one time, and then one has to wait until the enemy has moved a piece before one can make a move again or can effect another capture.

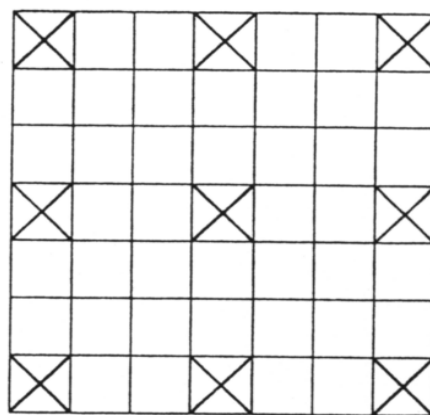
**Color-changing capture** means that if the opponent's pieces are captured, those captured pieces should be replaced by pieces of the player whose turn it is (put the replaced pieces in the place of the old pieces).

Examples: Shift or move the black piece from bottom to top to the square indicated by the arrow. On all 3 sides the white pieces are then captured. The three white pieces, flanked by the black piece are still to be removed. (Consequently the black piece captures 6 white pieces). Low (1836:382) also wrote about this game.

## GÂLA

Especially in the period in which the draughts in the Netherlands came under renewed interest the Dutch Bible Society (Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap) sent out linguists to the outlying areas of Netherlands East Indies to compile dictionaries for the different regions with a view to the preparation of Bible translations. Precisely these glossaries focus on draughts. Dr. Benjamin Frederick Matthes (1874, 1859) in his great dictionaries of Buginese and Makassar gave a very detailed description of a board game form in South Sulawesi.

The Gâla game described therein seems to have affinities with the Roman Ludus Latrunculorum in the way of capturing. On the other hand the inequality in numbers of pieces of the two parties and the granting of the central place of the board to the party with the least number of pieces points in the direction of a German board game of Roman origin (hnefatafl). Given that the gâla game even provides a proverb in Buginese it is very well conceivable that this game is still played in South Sulawesi and it cannot be excluded that a further report from an eyewitness will be done. Also Eck (1881:1026) and again Matthes (1859b) discussed the gâla game.



(Buginese: **rigâla**).

The Gâla game is played as follows. This game is like checkers or draughts, played by two persons on a board with 49 squares, of which 9 squares have a cross marked (soelângka). There are 4 corner squares (soe) and there is one central square (pôsi). This game uses 10 black

and 13 white pieces. The pieces move in a straight line and never move on a crossing or diagonally. Capture also takes place in this game, but in a completely different way from that in draughts.

When a piece (**bâtoe**) arrives between two pieces of the other party, or a piece standing on a corner of the board has an enemy piece on both sides, and this happened not because of the primitive setting, but as a result of shifting the pieces, then the piece in question is captured.

On the contrary the piece cannot be taken when it comes between two pieces of the other party's during setup of the pieces. Then at first one is obliged to shift away one of the two pieces and thereafter the piece can move back to the same place. This type of moving away is called **lêse** (= **sôro** = **shifting away**). During setup (Buginese: **dâko** = **taro**) of the pieces the black pieces should start the game by putting one of their pieces on the central square.

One initially puts all its pieces on one side of the board and then one moves its pieces to the other side of the board. This is called **mênre**. He who has the black pieces must endeavour to place them on the other half of the board **pôle galâna (bâttie mi-nâi)** in order to win the game. The task of the one who plays with the white pieces is to prevent this (that is called **bîtje**) in order to win the game. **Pôle** is a situation of the game when somebody is able to set the black pieces in such a way that it is blocking the enemy pieces, whereas he still can move one of its own pieces without giving the enemy the opportunity to capture his black pieces. Four pieces is the least number of pieces with which you get **pôle** and this is then in the corner. When somebody is blocking the enemy with his black pieces in such a way that he cannot move himself without giving the enemy the opportunity to capture his black pieces, this is then called **dôetje**, which is double smart when the enemy is blocking the black pieces (**rilêwo**). People try to avoid in this game the position of his pieces, called **tjâppa-keroe**, because than the enemy can capture them very easily.



Finally I will speak about 2 cases of which one is called **tângkoe**, and the other one **tângkoe-lana**. In the case of **tângkoe** 2 pieces are taken and in the case **tângkoe-Lana** 3 pieces are taken.

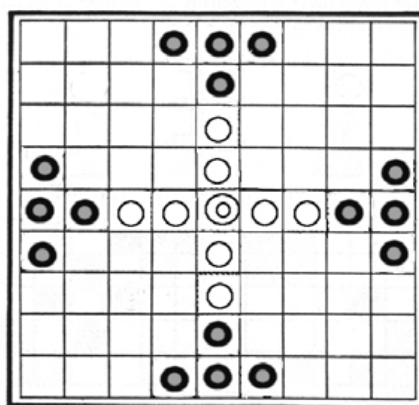
This game has a metaphor derived from the following êlong: **Marânnoe pôlegalâna / Nagîling tjâppa-kêroe/Naballêyang tângkoe**. He already rejoices that he will get **gâla** game **pôle** get, i.e. winning the game, but he shifts his pieces in a manner that he creates the figure-**tjâppa keroe**, whereby he gives the enemy advantage and finally he will be outwitted by the figure called **tângkoe-Lana**, so he suddenly loses 3 pieces consecutively and consequently loses all hope of victory. (If someone wants to marry a slave, but is not alert enough and lingers too long, then he will see that his Lord will snatch his beloved slave).

**Mapasiwoêno gâla mabânni**: nocturnal **gâla** fight, night **gâla** play. **Gâla risoêsang**: a glass ornament that one lets pend here and there, a reverse **gâla** piece. **Pagâla**: a **gâla** player. **Nisîkoki galâya**: Buginese **doêtja**: in the **gâla** game this is the name for when somebody has placed the black pieces in such a manner that the enemy's white pieces are blocked, but at the same time does not have the opportunity to move and consequently he is thus bound.

Kaudern (1929) describes this as a backgammon game, but Matthes does not speak about dice. The black starts the game first and puts a piece on the central square. The other pieces are placed one by one, each in turn, on one's own half.

## TAFL - HNEFATAFL

The age of this game is estimated by Murray (1952: 55-64) to be from the 1st to 4th century. It occurred in the Nordic countries and it has today been virtually superseded by chess. It was a board game played on a board of 18x18 intersections of a grid with 13x11, 11x11, 9x9, and 7x7 squares. The game is played by two people of whom one has a King on the central square of the board surrounded by a bodyguard of an equal number of uniform symmetrical pieces. The opponent has twice as many uniform pieces, which in four equal formations are distributed uniformly over the central squares along each of the four board edges, as shown in the accompanying drawing.

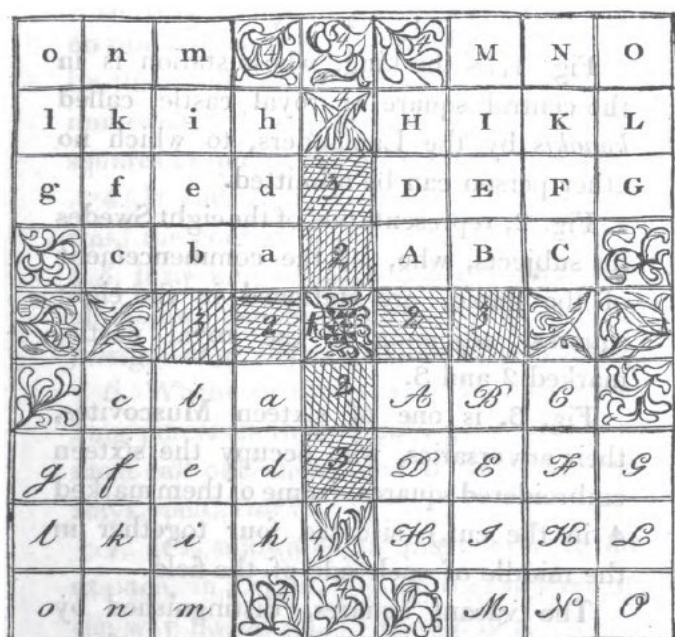


**Initial position of the game Tablut (Tafl, Hnefatafl)**

All pieces have a common orthogonal movement and only the King may occupy the central square. A piece that cannot free itself from the clamping of two enemy pieces is captured. The same applies to a piece that cannot cancel the clamping between two enemy pieces and the central square. Even in the case when the central square is taken by an own King. The King is captured by blocking of 4 enemy attackers or 3 enemy pieces on the edge of the board and by leaving the central square which means loss of the game.

Murray (1913, 1952) discovered this board game, of which the famous Carl Linnaeus (1732) noted down the rules in a travelogue during his stay in Lapland where the game was known under the name of Tablut.

Tafl was the older name for this game in Scandinavia that was later called Hnefatafl. It was a game already played by the Scandinavians. The game existed centuries ago in England where an English or Irish manuscript was known about Hnefatafl of the 10th century that had been translated by Robinson (1923). The report of Linnaeus is the last known reference to the living Tablut game. After 1732 the game seems to be extinct everywhere. J.H. Smith (1811, II:55-57) translated the diary of Linnaeus's of mixed Swedish and Latin into English in 1811. Bakker (1980-1982, issue 17) gave us the following rules referring to Smith in the Vacture magazine.



This writer (Linné, 1811, II:55-57) starts with giving a drawing of the board and another drawing of the three board pieces, saying that figure 1 is the king, whose station is on the central square or royal castle called konokis by the Laplanders, to which no other person can be admitted. Figure 2 represents one of the eight Swedes - his subjects, who at the commencement of the game are stationed in the eight squares adjoining to the royal castle, marked 2 and 3. Figure 3 is one of sixteen Muscovites, their adversaries, who occupy the sixteen embroidered squares (some of them marked 4 in the cut), situated four together in the middle of each side of the field. The vacant squares,

distinguished by letters, may be occupied by any of the pieces in the course of the game.

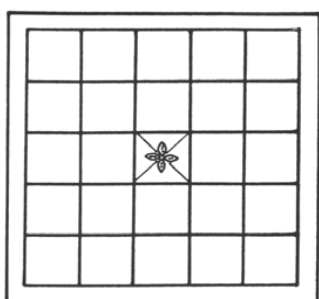
With respect to the rules of the game Smith goes further stating that:

1. Any piece may move from one square to another in a straight line, as from a to c; but not cornerwise, or from a to e.
2. It is not allowed to pass over the heads of any other pieces that may be in the way, or to move, for instance, from b to m, in case any were stationed at e or i.
3. If the King should stand in b and no other piece in e, l, or m, he may escape by that road, unless one of the Muscovites immediately gets possession of one of the squares in question so as to interrupt him.
4. If the king is able to accomplish this, the contest is at its end.
5. If the king happens to be in e and none of his own people or enemies are in f, g, i, or m, his exit cannot be prevented.
6. Whenever the person who moves the king perceives that a passage is free, he must call out **raichi**, and if there are two open, **tuichu**.
7. It is allowed to move ever so far at once in a straight line if the squares in the way are vacant, as from c to n.
8. The Swedes and the Muscovites take it in turn to move.
9. If any one man gets between two squares occupied by his enemies, he is killed and taken off, except the king, who is not liable to this misfortune.
10. If the king, being in his own square or castle, is encompassed on three sides by his enemies, one of them standing in each of the three squares numbered 2, he may move away by the fourth. If one of his own people happens to be in this fourth square and one of his enemies in number 3 next to it, the soldier thus enclosed between his king and the enemy is killed. If four of the enemies gain possession of the four squares marked 2, thus enclosing the king, he becomes their prisoner.
11. If the king is in 2 with an enemy on each of the adjoining squares, a, A, and 3, he is taken.
12. Whenever the king is taken or imprisoned, the war is over, and the conqueror seizes all the Swedes, the conquered party resigning all the Muscovites that he had taken.

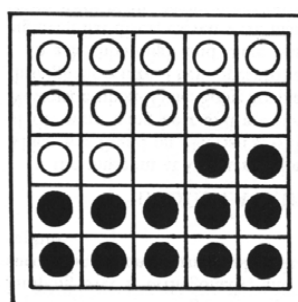
Some of these rules of Linnaeus continue being confusing. Logically speaking several other authors have written about this board game intending to establish better rules (Bell, 1960, Vol. I and II), but probably the best result was achieved by the independent scholar John C. Ashton (2010, Issue 13) who interpreted the Latin texts in another way. So those who want to know more about how exactly this game was played have to take into account the large study of Ashton.

## SEEGA

Lane (1890) described the Seega game<sup>36</sup> that was popular among the fellaheen in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Hundred years later Marin (1931:506) rediscovered the same game (High Jump) played by the Somali, but the capture of the pieces made it through jump. The Seega board is drawn on the ground using sticks, until obtaining a board of 5x5 squares. Both players (Murray, 1952:54) have the same number of dogs (kelb, pl. kilâb). The following rules are from Bell (1960, Vol. I: 82-84).



Seega



High Jump

As we see in the drawing, this board was used in Spain to play orthogonally the Alquerque 12 game too. Since it is logical to suppose that the game of High Jump of the Somalis is of a later date than the one of the Seega game, it is quite well possible that this way of capture of the Somalis was copied from the Spaniards.

### The first phase:

1. The players place two stones at a time on any vacant squares except the centre square which is left uncovered.
2. When the twenty-four stones have been placed, the player placing the last couple in position begins the second phase.

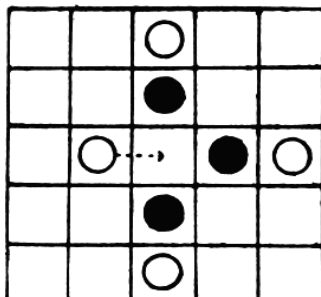
### The second phase:

3. A stone can move orthogonally to any adjacent vacant square, including the central one.

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<sup>36</sup> In the province of Barcelona players call this game "La Siga".

4. If a player can trap an enemy stone between two of his own (the custodian capture), he removes it from the board and continues to move the same stone as long as he makes captures with it.



**Capture in Seega**

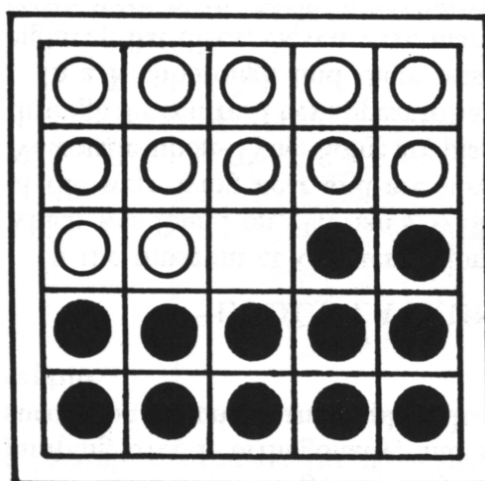
5. A stone may make more than one capture in a single move. In the figure above of this text the white stone captures three black ones by moving on to the centre square.

6. A player can move a stone between two enemy stones without harm.

7. A stone on the centre square cannot be captured even though it is trapped between two enemy pieces.

8. When a player cannot move, his opponent must make an opening for him by taking an extra turn.

9. The boards may be increased to 7x7 or 9x9 squares, each player then having 24 or 40 pieces.



**High Jump**

This game of Seega may have something to do with the Pente grammai that according to Pollux (1608) would exist from a board of 5x5 squares with a sacred line. According to Murray (1952:28). Pente grammai is nothing else than the current Pentalpha. Falkener (1892:63-67) and Parker (1909:603-604) wrote about this game too.

Somalis played another game on the same board, which they called **High Jump** (Bell, Book I:84) and has the same initial position as alquerque. In this game the pieces move orthogonally and capture other pieces jumping over them to an empty square.

The game **Ludus Latrunculorum** is talked about in *Anonim* (1647; 1678; 1663), *Mommeian* (1560), *Clerc* (1687.7: 86-94), *Averani* (1743, Volume 7: 461-573), and *Tilley* (1892, 335-336) works. Also *Hieronymus (Girolanus) Cardanus* (1557) also known as *Cardan* or *Cardano* used it in the title of his book: **De Ludus Latrunculorum**, but this work was lost (Calvo 1991, No. 7). The wise Italian was so fond of games that at a certain time of his life he had to sell all his furniture and his wife's jewelry! The Roman games were talked about by *Boulenger* (1627: 68-80), *Gronovius* (1699), *Averani* (1769:35-146), *Bruzza* (1877:81-99), *Marquardt* (1882, II:831-838), *Lafaye* (1904:1403-1405), *Ihm* (1890:223-239; 1891, Volume 4:208-220), *Mowat* (1895: 174-181; 238-245), and *Lasa* (1863:161-172, 193-199. 225-234, 257-263).



## CONCLUSION

In all probability the ancient Greek game **Petteia** was nothing more than a version of **Ludus Latrunculorum**, a game of which the practice was abandoned in Europe.

The game of **Ludus Latrunculorum**, according to his way of capture, a piece itself enclosed by two enemy pieces, has nothing to do with checkers where pieces are captured in a more modern way - by jumping over the enemy piece if the adjacent squar is unoccupied. In all probability the ancient Greek game **Petteia** was nothing more than a version of **Ludus Latrunculorum**, a game of which the practice was abandoned in Europe.

The game of **Ludus Latrunculorum**, according to his way of capture, a piece itself enclosed by two enemy pieces, has nothing to do with checkers where pieces are captured in a more modern way - by jumping over the enemy piece if the adjacent squar is unoccupied.

The Roman game **Latrunculi** needed centuries to spread to other countries. It is therefore quite possible that when it was not played in Europe anymore, it was introduced at the same time in African and Asian countries. If in such countries also a primitive culture existed, then it would take centuries to assimilate new habits. It seems logical to assume that **Ludus Latrunculorum** is still being played in their versions by primitive peoples, although it has changed the way people capture pieces. It is worth mentioning, for example, in the game **Salto Alto** which was played on a checkered board of **Seega** in Somalia; the pieces move as in **Seega**. But the capture is made by jumps. The starting position is the same to that of alquerque of twelve.

The game development is proven this way from **Ludus Latrunculorum** to alquerque and from there to the current checkers.



**Marco Aurelio Severino**



**Gerolamo Cardano**

The teachings of truth last forever  
The defense of lies briefly  
Govert Westerveld

## 2. JALDETA

### ETYMOLOGY OF THE TERM „JALDETA”.

The etymological dictionary *Corominas* (1986) says:

**Jaldeta, antic joc prohibit** (1334, 1410 AlcM), com el cast. jaldeta (Ss XIV,XV, XVII) “franja metàl·lica de color diferent”, (?) vessant de l’armadura d’una tenlada, y separació entre les seves peces”, derivat de jalde “color groc daurat” (manllevat del fr. ant. jalne “groc” Galbinus) CDCEC/DECH III, 33-6, 5255, (Galbula), potser com a nom d’un bèlit, palet o bastonet de color que s’usés en aqueix joc.

#### Loose translation:

Jaldeta, old banned game (1334, 1410 ALCM) as the Spanish Jaldeta (Centuries XIV, XV) "metal stripe of a different color" which came from a *tenlada* armor and the separation between its pieces, came from yellow, "golden yellow color" (borrowed from Old French "groc" Galbinus) CDCEC / DECH III, 33-6, 5255. Galbula, perhaps as a belit (ancient game), piece to throw, a colored stick or cane used in that game.

*Alcover* (1968, Volume 6) mentions in his dictionary:

**Jaldeta. ant. nom d’un joc.** “Done al senyor infant a jugar a la jaldeta V solidos”, doc. a. 1334 (Est. Univ. XIX, 209)

“No gos jugar dins la ciutat ..... a joch de grescha. de jaldeta, de naips. a la badalassa”, doc. a. 1410 (Sanchis Vida 43)

#### Loose translation:

Jaldeta, the ancient name of a game "Allow the Lord Infante to play the V solid Jaldeta", document of 1334 (Est. Univ. XIX, 209)

“No dog playing in the city..., the. dice game, Jaldeta, the card games of badalassa”, doc of 1410 (Sanchis Vida 43).

The **Enciclopedia universal ilustrada** points out: (1924, Volume 23:123)

“Falda”. Panop. En la antigua armadura ... esta falda podía ser de malla.

### **Loose Translation:**

“Skirt”. Panop. With the ancient armour.... this skirt could be a grid.

*Alonso* (1986) says:

Cierto juego de tahures ... (Translation: Certain game of gamblers)

## **DESCRIPTIONS OF JALDETA IN LITERATURE**

### **1314 Tafurerias by King Alfonso X the Wise**

XL Ley (Alfonso X El Sabio, 1314/1836 Ley 40:229)

Del que quisiere jugar las tablas á galdeta, a vallesta, o texuelo, ó dardo, ó á la valla de la capa, en qué manera lo han de facer é cómo. Todo ome que quesiere jugar las tablas, puedalo facer en esta guisa, que lo juegue al emperador, o a las fallas, e cabo que val, e al seis, e dos, e as, e non otro juego ninguno, e juegue fasta seis mrs. de la moneda blanca e non mas, e que juegue a envite fasta seis mrs., e de cinco mrs. adelante que pague el tablaje, e si jugaren a paradas, que lo paguen de la marveto, o de la gargista, o del azar en tres dados o en dos dados; e si jugaren a la faldeta fuera de la tafureria, nin a pares non pares, nin a a la cruzetas, nin a otro juego ninguno en que pierdan

dineros, que pague, salvo si fuere a la ballesta, o al texuelo, o al dardo, o a la via de la capa, sino fuere por mandado de aquellos que tubieren las tafurerias, que peche la pena que manda la carta del rey en razon de las tafurerias, salvo si jugaren a comer o a beber, ansi como dise en la ley de este libro.

**Loose translation:**



**Game board in 1500. Jaldeta?**

XL Law (Alfonso X The Wise, 1314/1836 Law 40:229)

Every human being who would like to play *tablas*, *ballesta*, *texuelo*, *dardo*, or *la valla de la capa*, the law explains how they have to play them. Each man who wants to play *tablas* can do it in this way, playing *emperador*, or *las fallas*, and *cabo que val*, and *at six*, and *two*, and *as*, and not any other game, and he can play till six mrs. of the white coin and not more, and he may play invite till six mrs., and as from five mrs. onwards he should pay the playhouse, and if he plays *paradas*, he should pay it of the *marveto*, of the *gargista*, of the luck with three dice or with two dice; and if he plays *faldeta* outside the

playhouse, *not pares non pares*, *not cruzetas*, not any other game with which he can lose money, then he should pay, unless it would be *ballesta*, *texuelo*, *dardo*, or *la via de la capa*, if not by order of those who have the playhouse, and pays the fine that the king's letter is ordering with regards to the playhouses, unless they play for eating or drinking, as is stated in the law figuring in this book.

### 1343 JUAN RUIZ - HITA ARCHPRIEST

The Archpriest in his manuscript Buen Amor talked about the game **Jaldeta**:

(...) tienden grandes alfámares (alfombras) e ponen luego tableros pintados de **jaldetas**, como los tablajeros (Ruiz, 1343/1972)

#### **Loose translation:**

They have large *alfamares* (carpets) and then put down tables painted with *jaldetas*, such as the professional players. (Ruiz, 1343/1972)

### 1376 QUEKE

Was **queke** the English name for Jaldeta?

*Murray* says (1913:442):

John atte Hille and his brother William prosecuted Nicholas Prestone, tailor, and John Outlawe for deceit and falsehood. Outlawe had invited them to win money at tables or chequers commonly called quek, and they had accompanied him to Preston's house where they found a pair of tables on the outside of which was painted a chequerboard that is called a quek. They first tried tables and then quek, losing regularly until their total losses amounted to 39s. 2d. They then examined dice and the board. All were false. On the board all the black squares were

depressed in three quarters, and on the remaining quarter the white squares were depressed. The board was adjudged to be burnt and the cheats were sentenced to the pillory. (Ashton, 1898:14)

### **1389 CASTLE CRIMINAL RECORD**

In 1389 a criminal appeared before the court of a castle in Paris who presented himself as a dice and "Dringuet" player, being Jaldeta the latter. (Duplès-Agier 1864, Volume I: 144, 150)

### **1428 CASTILIAN RURAL WORLD**

In 1428 Jaldeta was played in Northern Spain as Juan C. Martín Cea tells us in his work from 1991: "The Castilian countryside in the late Middle Ages. Junta de Castilla y Leon". On page 377 he provides us with information dating from 1428:

*"Que qualquier que jugase en tablero juego de la jaldeta o blanca..."*

#### **Loose translation:**

“anyone who were playing the board game *jaldeta* or *white* ...”

### **1432 JUAN ALFONSO DE BAENA**

*Juan Alfonso de Baena* (1406-1454) was a Spanish writer born in Baena. He belonged to a Jewish family, but later embraced the Catholic religion and the King *Juan II of Castile* appointed him as his secretary. One of his most important works was the **Cancionero de Baena** published in 1499. He was friends with constable *Alvaro de*

*Luna* and other leading members of the court. He dedicated poems to them as a form of supplication.

**436 Respuesta de Rodrigo de Arana** (Baena, 1432/1993:698)

A vos, don *Folido*, que aveys la visura/ fecha por arte a guis de **jaldeta**,/entyendo syn dubda ferir de saeta/ e de açertarvos por la escotadura.

**Loose translation:**

To you, sir *Folido* who has made the visor with the art of yellow squares (*jaldeta*), I think without a doubt that I will be able to injure you with an arrow / and to hit you into the round recess (weakness) of the armour.

**1558, CRISTOBAL DE VILLALON**

*Cristóbal de Villalón* (1505-1558) was a Spanish writer born in Villalón de Campos or in Valbuena de Duero in the early sixteenth century. He studied at the University of Alcalá de Henares where he learned Greek and finished his theological career without becoming a priest. From 1530 to 1545 he probably worked for a time as a professor at the University of Valladolid, retiring in 1557 to a small town to write his last work *Castilian Grammar*. 1558 is usually indicated as the year of his death. We find this in his book **El Scholástico** (Villalon, 1558/1967):

II, cap. 17: (...) De los inventores de los juegos. Pelota. Lucha. Naypes. Axedrez. Carnicoles. Los Dados. Alquerque. **Xaldeta**. Ingeniosos y apazibles para se recrear: porque segun Valerio dize, Scevola fue el primero que invento el juego de la pelota: y Hercules sobrellevo sus incomparables trabajos con el juego de la lucha y punaceste que el invento: y Palamedes estando sobre Troya por pasar el largo sitio invento los naipes: Mangrolina

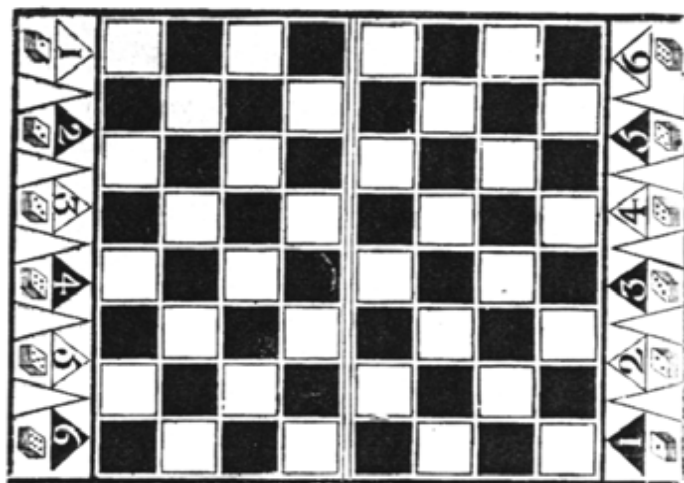


halle el axedrez, el qual fue tan diestro en el jugar que sin ver el tablero jugava paseandose por una sala con grandes jugadores. Los griegos inventaron el juego de los carnicoles: los mauros inventaron el juego de los dados: los hespañoles inventaron el juego del alquerque que llaman por otro nombre del castro: tambien los mesmos inventaron la **jaldeta**.

### **Loose translation:**

II, Chapter 17: (...) About the inventors of games.

Ball game, wrestling game, cards, chess, carnicoles, dice alquerque, jaldeta. Smart and comfortable for playing and to enjoy themselves: because as Valerio said Scevola was the first who invented the ball game: and Hercules wore his unmatched work with the wrestling game and punaceste that he invented: and Palamedes when he was in front of Troya invented the card game to pass the long besieging time: Mangrolina invented chess, and was so skilled in it that he could blind play against the best players, walking back and forward through a hall. The Greeks invented the game carnicoles: the Ethiopians the dice: the Spaniards invented the alquerque game and they call it by another name Castro: they also invented the jaldeta game.



**Würfel-Spiel (Dice game) in the 17th century  
Jaldeta / Quac-spel?**

## 1614 PHILIPP HAINHOFER

Brentaspiel = German dice game. Dice are thrown through a funnel (bottomless mold) on a board with squares (chess). One can agree before, for example, on which color the shots are valid. (Hainhofer, 1984:59,840/1).

## HOW TO PLAY JALDETA

First one should determine which terms were used abroad to designate this game. *Geerts* (1987:30) observes:

- The French game tric trac, described since the sixteenth century by this term and known to us in the Middle Ages by the names (Dutch medium) "quaecspel" and "tafelspel" (board games), was a popular pastime of the middle class as well as in the court (*Geerts*, 1987:30).
- The game "drinquet " or "trinquet " was a pastime practiced in the fourteenth century In it a dice was thrown on a chessboard and one would bet on what color the dice would stop on (*Geerts*, 1987:30).
- The common term in Dutch for the game tric trac or board games was "quaecspel". *Verwijs-Verdam*, according to *Geerts* points out some texts in which this becomes evident:

Datmen op Zinte Katrinen velt ghene crame en zel zetten noch te gheen dobbelspel daer houden nochte quecspel; ende yemant diet hierenhove dede, die zoudmen haar dobbelsciven, quecberde ende tafellen nemen ende ontweslaen. (*Geerts*, 1987:149).

### Loose translation:

It should not be placed in a festival, regarding the feast of St. Catherine, posts where dice games or Jaldeta are allowed: it should be removed and the dice, Jaldeta boards, and game pieces of people who practice it should be destroyed.

*Geerts* forgets that the term "verkeren" (tric-trac) was already being used in the fifteenth century. This, for example, is confirmed in the

lists of inventories and accounts of the Burgundian court. Verwijs-Verdam's *Dictionary* is, regarding the terms that refer to games, totally outdated. The term "verkeren" is often found in the seventeenth century literature. For example, in *J. Mommaert* (1658). In Germany a dice game by the name of **Würfelspiel** was known in the middle Ages (Tauber, 1987).

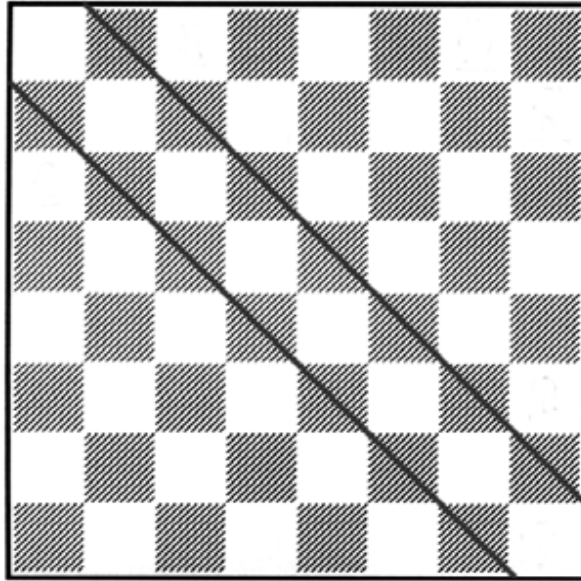
Jaldeta was probably practiced in France and Holland under the name "dringuet". This pastime seems to be some kind of dice game that was played in Holland on a "quec" board and in France on a "Brelan" (c.), (jeu d'eschiquier, point de l'eschiquier, blanc ou noir, trinquet/drinquet). This means that players have a board with alternating black and white squares and a color is chosen. Then 2 or 3 dice are thrown and a player wins the bet if the dice stop on the chosen color. If the dice stop on half of the squares, it is called "Drinken" (Drinking) and these shots are not valid.

Sometimes it is played with referees, as in billiards, to see if one of the dice did not touch another color. Such games often ended in murder and killings, because people used to cheat; for example, one would hit the board. The largest amount of information about this game comes from *Eustache Deschamps* (1346-1407) in his **Farce de mestre Trubert**. (Raynaud 1891, Volume 7:155-174).

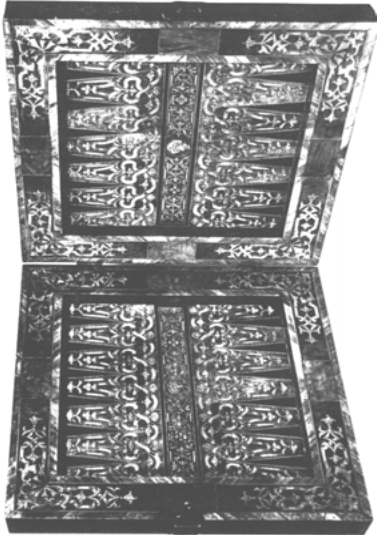
*J. van Humbeeck* (1978, *Toma* 46:327-352) notes regarding to queec in the 94 note on page 341: "La seule chose dont on puisse être sûr est que ce jeu se jouait avec des dés et un échiquier". (The only thing we can be sure of is that this game is played with dice and a board).

*Lessing* also describes a game with a chess/checkers board in 1617 on top of which people threw dice (Lessing, 1905:44). With regard to Spain one should consult the prototype work of Dr. *E. Wohlhaupten* (1931).

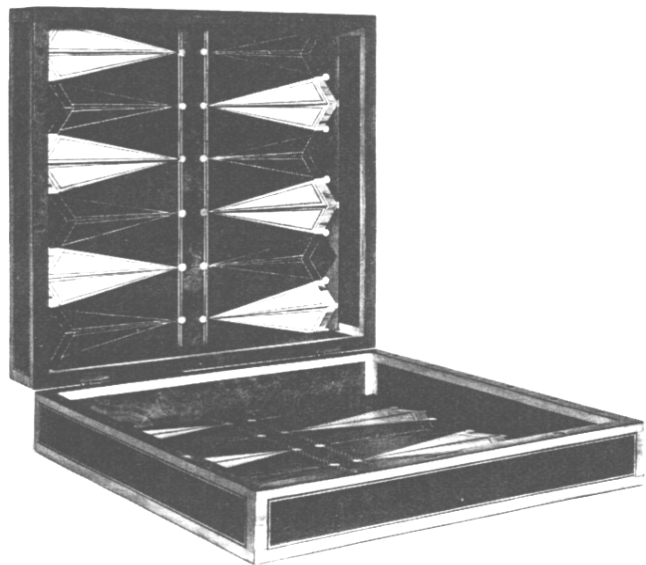
# QUAKEN



**Quaken**



**Trictrac line?**



**Trictrac line?**

The term **quaken** could cause some confusion, which usually translates to a board game called "backgammon" (Hermesdorf, 1905/1980:423; Francq 1776, Schotel 1868:95). *Francq* in *Schotel* says (Stoep, 1984:113) that the Romans called this game **lineae** - lines. The main line was the **Sacred Line** and this line was the same as the long diagonal in checkers, on which a player tries to put a king and tries to stay on it. However, other writers doubted the translation "quaken" as the board game "backgammon" (Verdam, 1885-1928, Stallaert 1890). Nevertheless, there remains the question why checkers in Holland was denominated from the tric trac line.

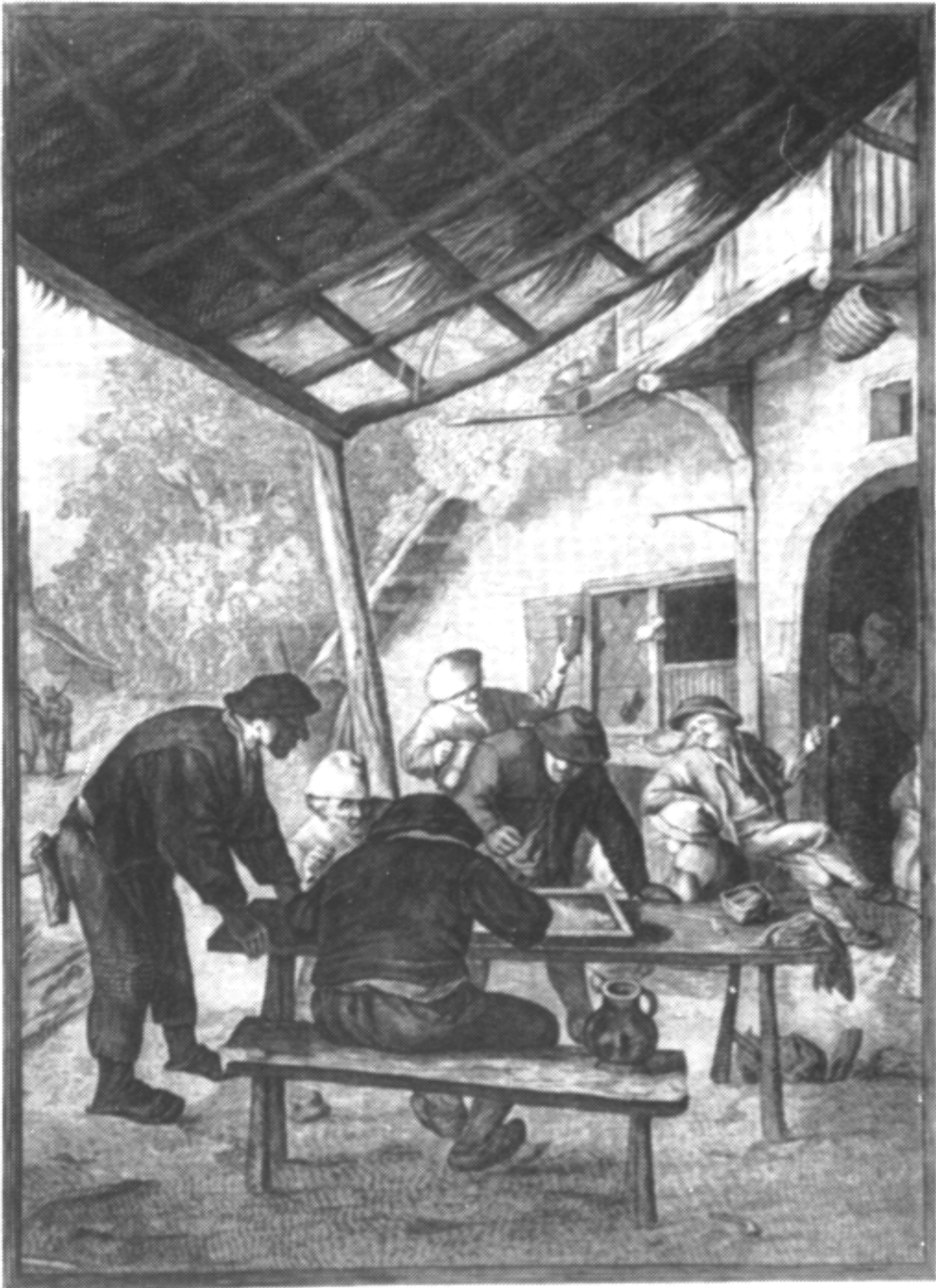
## CONCLUSION

In Spain it was already being practiced by Christians in the fourteenth century with a board of alternating black and white squares, but probably with a dice and no pieces. This game had nothing to do with checkers or chess.

The French term for Jaldeta is "dringuet" or "triquet"; a game played with a board (with alternating black and white squares) and dice, but no pieces. The English term for Jaldeta was probably "Queke", "quec", or "queec" just like in Holland.

The Dutch game "Quaec" was probably practiced before "Verkeren" which is an old term for tric trac in the sixteenth century. The aforementioned game was played with pieces.

One needs to research more about Jaldeta and its equivalents in other European countries to know exactly how this game was played. Then one can probably clarify why is it that the term tric trac lines was used to refer to checkers.



**Dice game in the 17th century**



**Tric-trac game in the 17th century**



To research is to see what everyone has seen  
and think what no one has thought  
Prof. Dr. Abert Szent Gyorgy - Medina Nobel Prize, 1937

### 3. SPAIN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

#### JOHN II (1406-1454)

When John II ascended the throne of Castile, he was still a child. His kingdom was torn in a fight on three fronts: the monarchy, King of Aragon's relatives, and the high nobility. From one of these fronts the King's favorite quarterback Alvaro de Luna was presented to defend the King's authority. Juan de Mena, the King's chronicler and one of the best poets at that time had an unwavering fidelity to Alvaro de Luna and cultivated a friendship with the poet and soldier, the Marquis de Santillana, Íñigo López de Mendoza, who was Alvaro de Luna's opponent and showed that clearly in his poems. A hesitant beginning of the Renaissance occurred at John II's court where literature was selected by the Marquis of Santillana in: outstanding, fair, and poor. The first group belonged to only Latin and Greek works. The knowledge of classical literature meant the discovery of the strength and importance of the language. The writers tried to take the Castilian into a new expression, resembling as much as possible Latin by accepting constructs, syntax, and Latin grammar. The Marquis de Santillana also had a huge bookshelf of books from many countries, mainly from Italy, and had several Latin works translated into Castilian, including *Vergilius*, *Ovidius* and *Seneca*. He was so famous that he was surrounded by many wise foreigners. One of his sons, Cardinal Peter Gonzalez de Mendoza years later would defend the rights of the Catholic Queen Isabella, and would be one of her most valuable collaborators. For us John II's court is vital, because he

was the King's chronicler, Juan de Mena, who in 1454 spoke in one of his poems about a precursor of the checkers game. (Menendez 1969; López Santillana c 1450/1988;. Mena c. 1450/1989).

## **ISABELLA, THE CATHOLIC QUEEN**

Queen Isabella, unlike in other countries, had more power in Spain than her husband Ferdinand.

When she got married, Fernando had to sign an agreement stating that he would accept the laws and customs of Castile. Therefore he had to settle in Castile and could only leave on his wife's approval. Nominations and appointments also required the Queen's approval.



**Isabella the Catholic**

Isabella could precede King Henry so she could be the undisputed Queen of Castile and Ferdinand would receive the courtesy title of King. When Isabella sat on the throne in 1473, she gave her husband the same powers she had. In 1481 Ferdinand would do the same with his wife in the kingdom of Aragon.



**King Ferdinand**

Queen Isabella appointed all the church representatives, thus she would ensure the availability of important partners in political and religious matters. This way she could establish the Inquisition in 1478 with the Pope's help. The queen hated cards and gambling and considered professional players of the same status as blasphemous.

The political union did not mean for the two kingdoms to merge. Each realm maintained its institutional organization, laws, tax system, currency, weights, and measures. Thus each kingdom kept its own peculiar economic and social structure within the feudal laws. Even with the law in hand the subjects of a kingdom were considered

foreign in the other one. The customs between the two kingdoms confirmed this situation of independence.

In 1475, only a year after the accession, Isabella heard that Alfonso V had crossed the Portuguese border with 20,000 soldiers to march towards Palencia. He had married in a civil ceremony the Spanish Joanna la Beltraneja and thought he would then have the right to make himself King of Castilla and León. Logically Isabella defended their legal rights, quickly gathering several thousand troops in Toledo and took the lead in armor, just like Joan of Arc in France. Isabella was lucky to be there with Cardinal Peter Gonzalez de Mendoza, a very skilled man those days. He was the son of one of the most famous poets, the Marquis de Santillana. The Cardinal, just like his father, was well educated, had a charismatic personality, and was an experienced resourceful military and politician.



**The queen moved around her territory**

The support of the church seemed decisive to defeat Alfonso V. Isabella actively participated in the recruitment of soldiers and ran long distances on horseback to prepare for the final battle. She served as the general with military efficiency and boldness because at one

point she would command to attack the enemy lines that were superior in quantity. To better judge the activities of the queen it is curious to know that in 10 months in 1481 she ran over 2,500km on horseback without neglecting the government's common duties.

Many years had passed when the queen inspected her troops on horseback during the conquest of Granada. Not happy with this she also wanted to see the trenches on the front lines. Ci Hiaya, the Moorish commander, agreed to suspend the hostilities when the Queen wanted to inspect the fortifications. During the inspection Baza approached from the Moorish army in full dress with the prince in charge. He waved the queen from his horse with deep respect and some of their riders gave an acrobatic demonstration of their riding art. Those were other times of great respect for the country's first lady. (Menendez 1964; Torres, 1985; Vizcaino 1987; Kamen 1984; Menendez 1969).

## **RENAISSANCE**

Not so long ago we thought that the Renaissance had little influence on Spanish life. Not surprisingly, Spain was a country different from the rest of Western Europe, since from 711 to 1492 parts of the country belonged to Islam, not to Christianity.

Even though since 1250 the Arab domination was limited to the small kingdom of Granada, between Gibraltar and Lorca near Cartagena, the presence of Islam was still clearly felt in the renaissance period. In fact, even nowadays the differences between Spain and Western Europe are explained by the persistent Semitic elements in their culture. There seems to be a consensus in which Spain developed its unique Renaissance from Italy and not from Islam (Hay 1988).



**The Moorish kingdom of Granada in 1304**

The main center of the Spanish humanism, where Valencia was greatly distinguished by his contacts with the Italian Court of Alfonso V the Magnanimous (1397-1458), was John II's court (1406-1454) and later the University of Alcala de Henares, founded in 1508 by Cardinal Cisneros. Thanks to humanism life was seen in another way and the Greco-Roman culture reemerged. But on the other hand it is true that it had a negative influence on religious life. Thanks to the art protection prompted by Cardinal Cisneros a polyglot Bible was printed in Alcalá de Henares and its cover was reproduced. The nuanced weapon is property of Cardinal Cisneros. In the sixteenth century many used a similar weapon to extol their nobility. (Hay 1988).

Haec tibi pentadecas tetragonon respicit illud  
 Hospitium petri et pauli ter quinque dierum.  
 Namque instrumentum vetus hebdoas innuit: octo  
 Lex noua signatur. ter quinque receptat utrunque.



Vetus testamentum multiplici lingua nunc  
 primo impressum. Et imprimis  
 Pentateuchus Hebraico Bre-  
 to atque Chaldaico idioma-  
 te. Adiecta unicuique sua  
 latina interpreta-  
 tione.

The Spanish polyglot Bible of 1517

We would better understand the authors of checkers books and the authors' theories that the game was of Roman or Greek origin, created during the Renaissance. Thanks to the Renaissance science experienced great and fast development.



**Image of Queen Isabella on  
Nebrija grammar, 1493**

Elio Antonio de Nebrija was the main and most representative figure of Spanish humanism in the period of the Catholic Monarchs, to whom we owe the definitive introduction of linguistic science. When Nebrija finished his book on Spanish grammar, he visited Queen Isabella accompanied by his friend, the friar brother Hernando de alavera who by then was the bishop of Avila. The New World had not been discovered yet, but it seemed that Nebrija had already seen it. The idea



of grammar to such vulgar language was something completely new and so Isabella asked about the usefulness of such work. The bishop replied to this, in Nebrija's words, which he last quoted in the introduction to his book: (Nebrija 1492b).

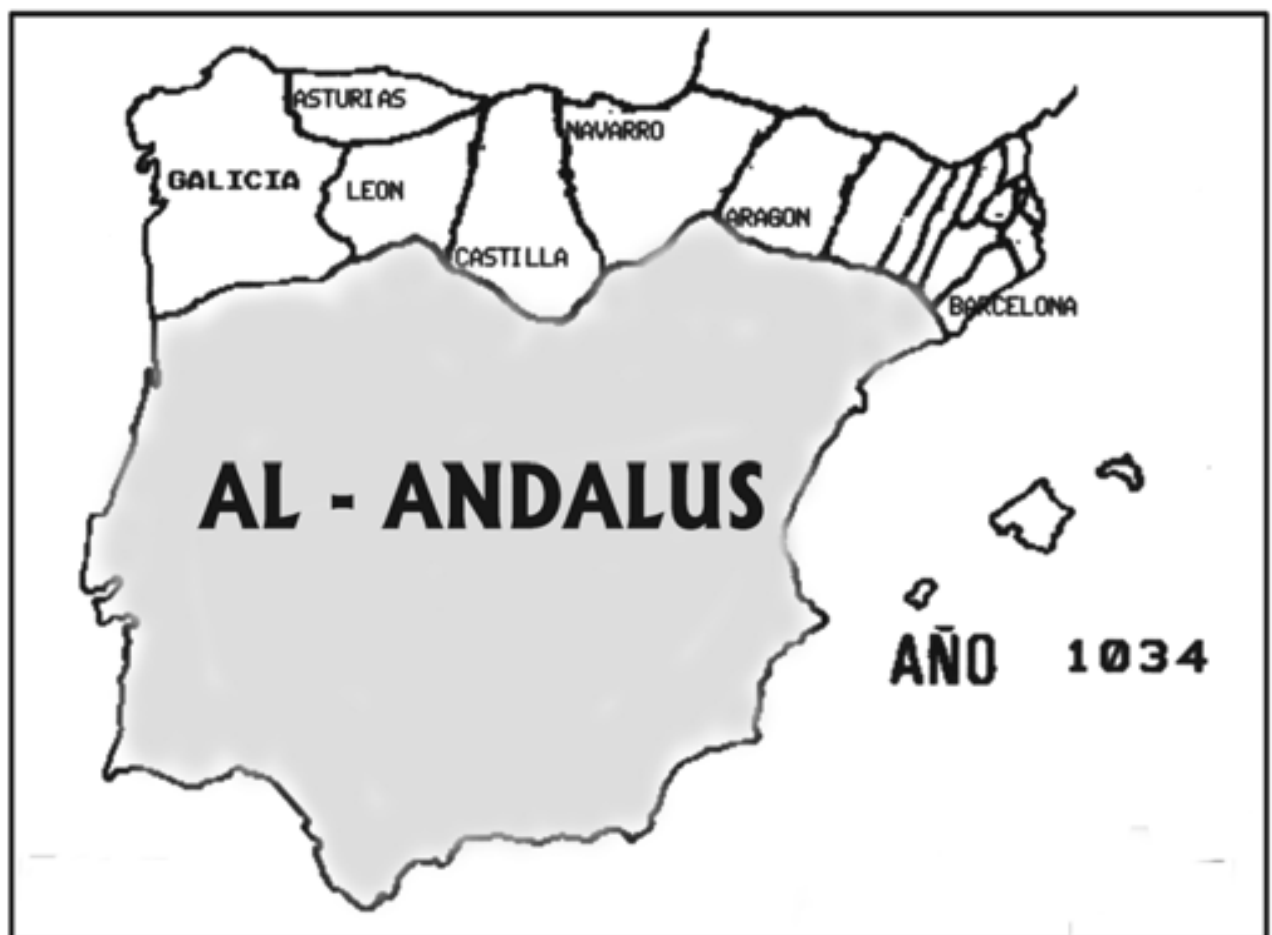
“El tercero provecho deste mi trabajo puede ser aquel que, cuando en Salamanca di la muestra de aquesta obra a vuestra real majestad, y me preguntó que para qué podía aprovechar, el mui reverendo padre Obispo de Avila me arrebató la respuesta; y respondiendome por mi dixo que después que vuestra Alteza metiesse debaxo de su iugo muchos pueblos bárbaros y naciones de peregrinas lenguas, y con el vencimiento aquellos tenían necesidad de recibir las leyes quel vencedor pone al vencido, y con ellas nuestra lengua, entonces, por esta mi arte, podrían venir en el conocimiento della, como agora nosotros deprendemos el arte de la gramática latina para deprender el latin.”

**Loose translation:**

"The third benefit of my work may be that which, when I gave to your royal majesty in Salamanca an example of that work, and I asked myself to whom this could give benefits. Then the very reverend Bishop of Avila snatched the answer from me; and responding for me he said that after Your Highness would put under his yoke many barbarian peoples and nations of pilgrims' languages, and with the maturity (of years) those had need for laws that the winner put to the loser, and with that our language. Then for this my art could come to the knowledge of it, as we now take possession of the art of Latin grammar for knowing Latin".

## THE CONVERSION OF THE MOORS

The introduction of the new powerful checkers in the game of chess and checkers was the work of Christians or Jews, not because the Moslem culture did not give women a privileged position, as was the case in the Christian culture. The Koran barely considered them human beings, and divided mankind into 12 orders, to 11 of which belonged thieves, witches, pirates, and drunkards, and the lowest, 12th, belonged to women.



**The Moorish kingdom in 1034**

The practice of polygamy, defended by Muhammad, lowered the position of women to that of slaves and turned them into men's property. After the conquest of Granada the victors let the defeated

choose between baptism or emigration. The baptized and Christian-converted Moors were deported to different regions of Spain, namely Andalusia, Aragon, and Valencia. Precisely in these regions checkers was developed. For example, 30% of Valencia's inhabitants were Moors in 1500. In 1609 Moors were finally expelled from Spain. After the conquest of Granada the Mohammedan culture was completely nullified (Burckhardt 1985; Arié 1984; Sanchez 1982; Bunes 1983). This manifested itself immediately in chess and little later in andarraya.



**The Moorish kingdom in 1200**

## **THE EXODUS OF THE SPANISH JEWS**

Many have wondered how it was possible for checkers to spread everywhere, but this is not so difficult to understand if one knows the history of the Spanish Jews in the fifteenth century. The Jews in Spain were always persecuted people. They lived in special ghettos and were artisans, merchants, and scientists by nature (Castro, 1984). As a result ordinary people should live in poverty while the Jews were wealthy. When anything happened in any place where there were Jews, they would always suffer the consequences.

But the Jews knew how to introduce themselves over the centuries to the highest scientific and political circles and Spain prospered thanks to that. After the conquest of Granada the Catholic kingdoms wanted to have a religion and the Jews had to convert or emigrate. Many Jews had already converted to Christianity decades ago and others followed them. However, the vast majority showed their religious conscience, since of the nearly 300,000 Jews then living in Spain 250,000 chose the distressing exile.

Their exodus was much like mass emigration. Most of them went to Portugal and from there to Africa, where they settled in several countries. Castilian Jews who remained in Portugal received only temporary asylum in exchange for large sums of money. Five years later they were still being forced to convert to Catholicism, which caused new exodus, which led a group of Jews to Holland to set up a flourishing Jewish community. The Jews of Aragon and Catalonia went to Italy by sea, where they received asylum. Later they went to the Balkans, Turkey, and Palestine under Ottoman rule, regions where they were welcomed with open arms and given remarkable cultural and religious freedom.

Sultan Bayeceto thought it really weird that the Kings would be stupid enough to get rid of such industrious people and took advantage of their cultural advancement. This had already started with the press. As proof of it we have today the newspaper Salom, edited every week in

Sephardic in Istanbul with 3,500 copies. Sephardic was the former Spanish language that Jews brought to Turkey. Today at least 25,000 Sephardim live in Istanbul. They are the descendants of the expelled Spanish Jews who fortified the Spanish speakers' Sephardic colonies. Surnames like Cordoba, Toledano, Calcerón, Mayorcas, Sevilla, Salinas, etc. are clear proof of the above. There were also numerous groups of Jews who left for England, Germany, Flanders, and Poland.

In Spain we know little about the Jewish culture, because the Spanish Inquisition was foolish enough to burn all collected Hebrew books. In Salamanca, for example, the inquisitors burned more than 60,000 copies next to the monastery of San Esteban. About Valencia we know that in 1497 the Council of the Supreme Inquisition ordered the confiscation of all books and writings on medicine, surgical, and other sciences and skills. Needless to say, the Inquisition destroyed everything that had to do with the Jews so as not to leave traces of Jewish culture.

One of the biggest mistakes committed by the Catholic Kings was precisely the expulsion of the Jews; people so rich in culture, science, trade, and monetary possibilities. If you also take into account that both the conquest of Granada and Columbus' trip were made by Jewish financial circles, then you can consider expelling them as a very unfair thing. Luckily enough Jews stayed and diplomatically converted to Christianity while secretly practicing their own religion. Many of them were important figures who had contacts with their families abroad and tended to have cultural and commercial exchanges. (Amador de los Rios, 1984; Blazquez 1988). Therefore we can safely assume that checkers spread throughout Europe thanks to these industrious and skillful people.

## CONCLUSION

Thus by studying the history of Queen Isabella in the fifteenth century we go from one surprise to another:

In 1469 Ferdinand, Heir to the kingdom of Aragon, married Isabella, Future queen of Castile. Thus it crystallized the union of two important territories with crown and the creation of New Spain with modern borders.

In 1478, after the publication of the papal bull the Spanish Inquisition was established. The Moors and Jews were forced to choose between Christian conversion and exile.

In 1492 the two monarchs finally conquered the last Islamic enclave in Granada, after which the reconquest was a fact.

In 1492 all the Jews who refused to convert to Catholicism were expelled from Spain.

In 1492, with Isabella and Ferdinand's approval, Columbus was preparing his voyage to discover a new route to the Indies, which would later be the discovery of a new world empire.

Finally, Ferdinand and Isabella thought about how to cut short the power of the nobility through administrative reforms, thus leaving the way open for a modern nation and state.

Trade and cultural contacts between Spain and Italy were very intense, since Sicily and Naples belonged to Spain back then.

Spain enjoyed a Very brief spell of being the most powerful country in the world, in whose borders the sun never set. Thus the time to show it to the world through political, economic, and cultural activities had come. A leading figure of Spanish humanism was Elio Antonio

Nebrija who wrote a grammar book in 1492, a Latin-Spanish dictionary also in 1492, and a Hispanic-Latino one in 1495, in which words such as *king* and *andarraya* are found. Queen Isabella spent all her money on the conquest of Granada and once conquered, she greatly supported the cultural life in Spain through cash contributions. Something was certainly set in motion in Spain just after the crucial year of 1492.

If men, once they have found the truth,  
were not to twist it again, I would be satisfied.  
Goethe

## 4. SCRUPORUM & CALCULORUM

### DESCRIPTIONS OF SCRUPORUM & CALCULORUM IN LITERATURE

#### 65? QUINTILIANUS, MARCO FABIO (42-120?)

Celebrated Spanish writer of Roman times, born in Calagurris, presently called Calahorra (Logroño), even though there are those who think he is a native of Rome despite the fact that there is no proof of that, and that San Jerónimo who had no interest in whether Quintiliano hailed from Calahorra or not, states that he was a native of the city, and the same is stated in the Codex of Eusebio Cesariense. There has also been discussion about the date of his birth, but the apt conjectures by Dodwell allow us to believe that it must have taken place in the year 42 at the latest, as there are people who suppose that he was born in the year 35. We do not know exactly in what year he died either; most say it was in 120 A.D., and some claim that his death came to pass long before, in the year 95. *De Institutiones Oratoria constitute* the true glory of Quintiliano, a highly notable work that has sufficed to guarantee his immortality. It is composed of 12 books. In book VIII begins the treaty of elocution, which continues in book IX. Book X is about the exercises of composition, of reading, and of imitation, performing a critical study about the main Greek and Latin authors, as far as they can be useful to the speaker, constituting a historical summary of the literature. In book XI, which is mostly about the memory, the pronunciation, the gesture, and the action, can be noticed apt considerations about the aesthetics of the declamation. The first complete manuscript of the work *De Institutione Oratoria* was found by chance in 1417 in the monastery of Saint-Gall by Poggio, who



attended the Council of Constance. The first edition comes from Philip de Lignamine (Rome, 1470). It was followed by the ones from Jenson (Venice 1471), Zaroto (Milan, 1476), Véneto (Venice, 1481), Aldo (Venice 1514), Lerevelio en Gronovius (Leiden 1665), (Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada 1922, Tomo 48:1393).

Nebrija (1529) wrote about this author, and Caro (1624) quotes him as follows:

**De institutione oratoria, lib. XI, 2.38**

At vero Scaevola in ludo duodecim scruporum, cum prior calculum promovisset essetque victus, dum rus tendit, repetito totius certaminis ordine, quo dato errasset recordatus, rediit ad eum, quicum luserat, isque ita factum esse confessus est.

**Loose translation:**

We were told that Scaevola, after a game of Latrunculus, in which he made the first move and was defeated, was going over the entire game in his mind whilst walking down a field, and once he figured out the move that cost him the game, came back to tell the man he had played against about it, and whom confirmed he was right.

**Carrera, (1617) menciona:**

Quintiliano nel lib. 10 nel cap. 2: "An vero Scevola in lusu duodecim scruporum cum prior calculum promovisset".

Fabius Quintilian wrote about the forerunner of the tric trac game: The game with 12 lines (squares). <Duodecim scriptorum>

## 1490 ALFONSO DE PALENCIA (1490/1967)

### Calculus:

dicatur minimus lapillus quo veratur homo si calcet eum pede nudo: est quidem lapillus terre admixtus qui nonnu <n>q<u>à<m> ob brevitatem sine molestia calcatur.

### Calculi:

etiam in ludo alearum dicuntur q<uod> per vias ordinarias numerum servant quasi per calles vel q<uod> sint leves. Calculus numerus sentia ratio vel carbo vel lapideus gladius ex silice: & calculator computator numerator a calculis id est lapillis: inde calculatorius liber qui de numero tractat. Calculo calculas calculavi id est numerare unde veniunt supra dicta nomina verbalia: & calculatio & adverbia calculatium & calculatorie.

### Loose translation:

#### Calculus:

This is what those pebbles that real men step on barefoot are called. The pebbles (on the road) are mixed with dirt and one can never step on them without feeling slight pain.

#### Calculi:

Despite this. In the game of luck the pebbles that are moved according to the points indicated by the dice are called *calculi*, along with a small contribution of strategy and tactics. The calculations are equivalent to a sword, coal, or big rock. For an accountant calculations are the equivalent of what a sword is for a soldier. Someone who knows how to calculate cannot be fooled. From the word *calculus* are derived many words and adverbs, calculations, calculating, calculable.

## 1495 ANTONIO DE NEBRIJA

In his famous dictionary we find: (Nebrija, 1495)

Alquerque	Calculorum ludus	
Andarraia	Calculorum ludus	<b>NOVUM</b>
Dame is almost a lady	Domina-ae	<b>NOVUM</b>
Move	Tractus. us	
Game of Checkers	Calculorum ludus	
Game piece	Calculus calculi	

## 1554 JOHANNES FRISIUS

Also called Hans Fries; born near Zurich in 1505 and deceased around 1565 in the same city. Theologian, philologist, and pedagogue, in 1535 he was a Latin and Greek teacher in Basel. Two years later he was Rector of the gymnasium of Zurich. He authored the Latin-German dictionaries (student edition) published in 1541, 1548, 1554, and 1556. In the *Friscus* dictionaries (1541; 1556) we find the term *Zwölfstein*.

The expression *Zwölfstein* can refer both to the game of square of twelve (alquerque de doce) and to the game of checkers.

## 1556 ULISSES ALDROVANDI (1522-1605)

Celebrated naturalist, philosopher, and physician. From a noble and rich family, he was educated in Bologna. In 1549 he was incarcerated due to suspicions of him having embraced lutheranism, not regaining his freedom until the death of Paul III. Afterwards he traveled throughout Europe. He was appointed as a Bolognese reader of studies, dedicating himself to teaching, a job that he alternated with numerous travels during which he gathered documents and materials

for his monumental work. According to Dr. *Chicco* he wrote a manuscript in 1556 about the games titled: *De ludis tum publicis tum privatis metho-dus*, which is located in the library of the University of Bologna.



**Ulisses Aldrovandi**

Fulfilling the wishes expressed by Aldrovandi in his will, in which he ordered the creation of a museum with his collections, herbaria, and engravings, on June 12 1907 the Aldrovandi Museum was inaugurated in the city of Bologna. (Dizionario Bompiani 1987, Tomo I:55; Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada 1909, Tomo 4:359).

The professor *A. Chicco* (1978:10) wrote amongst other things about this author:

Quasi contemporanea è la citazione del giuoco della Dama contenuta in un manoscritto del grande naturalista Ulisse Aldrovandi, rimasto inedito, conservato nella biblioteca universitaria di Bologna (Miscellanea A 21) e intitolato *De Ludis tum publicis tum privatis methodus*. Inscritto, con numerazione separata e indice, dopo la carta 825, il *Methodus* da pag. 20 a 25 contiene una trattazione sulla Dama che è rimasta completamente ignorata dagli studiosi di questo giuoco, pur essendo il più antico testo di autore italiano contenente le regole della Dama in Italia.

L'Aldrovandi ebbe la prima idea di questo scritto fin dal 1556, come è comprovato da una serie di appunti (-De Ludo-) conservati in altra Miscellanea A 64 di quella stessa biblioteca, datati 15 dicembre 1556: la successiva e più ampia stesura va quindi fissata dopo questa data. L'Aldrovandi intitola il capitolo sulla Dama come **Scruporum duodecim ludus fabis**, ma dà anche il nome italiano **gioco di Dama** e aggiunge il nome belga (recta, olandese?) **Damen** e il nome francese **jeu aux Dames**. Il curioso nome di **fabae** (fave) deriva del fatto che l'Aldrovandi, da buon naturalista, considerò utilizzabili come pedine questi baccelli, sostituendoli anche con pietruzze o con tavole dello sbaraglino. Egli precisa la disposizione delle pedine, che possono indifferentemente collocarsi tutte nelle case nere o tutte nelle case bianche delle prime tre traverse dei lati contrapposti; descrive il movimento e il modo di catturare, avvertendo che per la cattura occorre che la casa al di là della pedina avversaria non sia occupata da un **custos**; ricorda che se una pedina giunge all'ottava traversa diventa Dama: può essere contrassegnata da due **fave** o, se si adoperano le **tavole**, da due **tavole** sovrapposte. La Dama gode di vari privilegi, fra i quali quello di poter retrocedere e di non poter essere catturata da una pedina isolata; se, però, è attaccata contemporaneamente da due pedine e non ha nelle case retrostanti i “custodes”, una delle due pedine può catturarla. Questa variazione rispetto alle regole attuali fue probabilmente originata da qualche reminiscenza delle regole vigenti nei paesi del nord Europa, che ammettevano la cattura del King da parte del Man.

### **Loose translation:**

Almost simultaneously is the quote of the checkers game contained in a manuscript of the great naturalist Ulisse Aldrovandi. It remained unpublished and is preserved in the university library of Bologna (Miscellaneous A 21) and entitled *De Ludis tum tum publicis privatis methodus*. It is inscribed, with separate index and numbering, after the paper 825, the *Methodus* from p. 20 to 25 and contains a discussion on the Lady that was completely ignored by scholars of this game, despite being the oldest Italian author's text containing the rules of the lady in Italy.

Aldrovandi had the first idea of this paper since 1556, as evidenced by a series of notes (-De Ludo-) stored in other Miscellaneous A 64 of that same library, dated December 15, 1556: The next and most extensive drafting should therefore be established after this date. Aldrovandi titled the chapter on Lady *Scruporum ludus duodecim fabis*, but he also gives the Italian name of the game checkers and adds the Flemish name Damen and the French name jeu aux Dames. The curious name of fabae (fave) comes from the fact that Aldrovandi, as a good naturalist, considered these pods to be used as pawns, even replacing them with stones or backgammon boards. He specifies the arrangement of the pieces, which can be placed either on all black or on all white squares of the first three beams of opposite sides; he describes the movement and the way to capture, warning that during the capture the square beyond the opposing checker should not be occupied by any piece; Remember that if a pawn reaches the last rank, it becomes a Dama: it may be marked by two broad beans or, if you seek tables, two overlapping tables (discs). The lady enjoys various privileges, including that of being able to move back and it is not allowed to capture the dama by an isolated pawn; if, however, the dama is attacked simultaneously by two pawns and the dama is not in the square behind the "custodes", one of the two pawns can capture the enemy dama. This change compared to the current rules probably originated from some reminiscences of the rules in force in the countries of northern Europe, who admitted the capture of the King (Dama) by the pawn.

In all likelihood *Aldrovandi* referred to the word *fabio* and not *fabis*. *Fabio* is used in combination with the term *Scruporum duodecim lus* and was mentioned by Adrianus Junius (1567). This is associated with the Latin author Marco Fabio Quintilianus of Spanish origin. Since the work of this author was written in 1567, it seems acceptable to suppose that Aldrovandi's work was truly written towards the end of the sixteenth century, as stated by Dr. Pratesi (1987b:40-41), and in addition to that, various aspects of the literary text are based on a previous work (Garzoni, 1585).

Dr. Chicco was a celebrated historian, chess player, and checkers player who recently wrote about the history of chess in Italy (Chicco, 1990).

## 1567 ADRIANUS IUNIUS (1511-1575)

His real name was Adriaan de Jonghe. He was born in 1511 in Hoorn and died in Arnemuiden in 1575. He had a Doctorate in Medicine from Bologna, traveled a lot around many countries, such as France, England, and Denmark. Starting in 1565 he was a doctor at the service of the Council of Haarlem and Rector of the city's Latin School. His nickname was Erasmus Segundo.



**Junius Adrianus**

Scruporum duodecim lusus, **Fabio** (Junius, 1567)

B. Damen

G. Le ieu aux dames

I. Frisius Germanis dicitur, der Zwolfstein (Frisius, 1541; Frisius 1556)

*Fabio* means here *Fabius Quintilianus*, a Latin author we dealt with in the beginning of this chapter.

## 1585 ADRIANUS IUNIUS (1511-1575)

Scruporum duodecim lusus, **Fabio** (Junius, 1585)

(greco) schyraphia, Polluci

le ieu aux dames

the game of draughts or dames: some take it for the play of chests.

## 1586 ADRIANUS IUNIUS

(Junio, 1586; Jansen 1995, N° 44:49-50)

scruporum duodecim lusus Fabio.

Iohannes Frisius Germanis dici ait *der zwolfstein*

hra hnewnij ka dwanacti kameny (the mad draughts game with 12 pieces)

As in the new chess it seems to me that the term *mad* is used for a new game. (like in chess with a dama).

## 1588 KILIAAN

Dam/dammeler      **Lapis, scrupus, sive globus dyada valens in lusu.**  
(Kiliaan, 1588)

### **Loose translation:**

Double piece or token (king) of great value in the game.

Steck oft schijve daer men mede speelt int berd. **Scrupus**

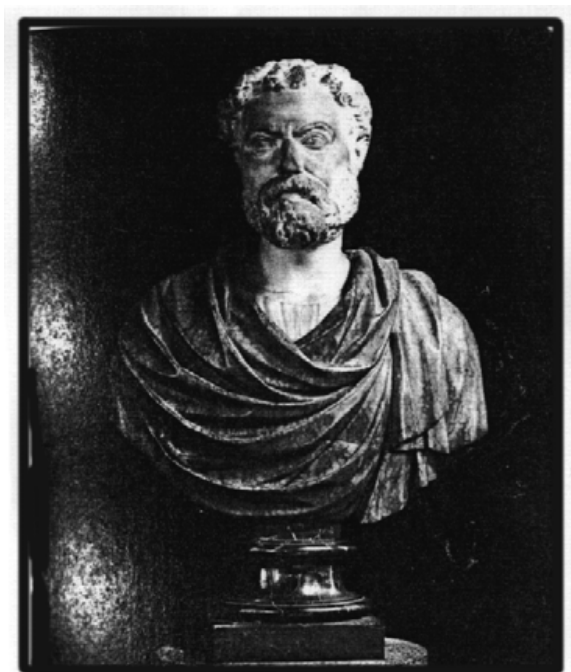
### **Loose translation:**

Piece or disc with which one plays on the board. **Scrupus**



**APPENDIX** (Words not adapted to flamenco and of Latin, French, Italian, Spanish or other foreign origins)

Dame/damme	<b>Domina, hera</b>
Dame/dam-steck	<b>Scrupulus, calculus</b>
Damen/dammen	<b>Ludere scrupis duodecim. vulgo ludere ad dominas</b>
Dame-spel/dam-spel	<b>Lusus duodecim scruporum</b>



**Marco Fabio Quintilianus**

## CONCLUSION

During the Renaissance humanists already intended to see in common games of that time those described by classical authors. In this manner during the sixteenth century the game of checkers, which was described by the Latin name *Scruporum duodecim lusus*, was confused with *ludo duodecim scruporum* described by Marco Fabio Quintilianus (65). However, the game he mentioned as the one that was played by *Scaevolam* was a game of tric-trac

With all likelihood both Aldrovandi (1585) and Hadrianus Junius (1567) intended to refer with the use of the word *fabis* (fabio?) to the term *fabio* by Marco Fabio Quintilianus. Literature by this writer was available only after 1417, so if *ludo duodecim scruporum* truly was a game of checkers, this Latin term could not have been used before the sixteenth century.

The Latin term for the game of checkers, in case it really did exist in the fifteenth century in Spain, was *calculorum ludus*. This term was used for the game of alquerque and for the game of andarraya; this last game, according to Nebrija in 1495, was a new term used for a game.

At the present time it is considered that the game of andarraya was a game with lines that was not yet played on a checkers board. More research is needed to adequately comprehend this game.

DICTIONARIUM  
TEVTONICO-LATINVM;  
PRÆCIPVAS TEVTONICÆ

LINGVÆ DITIONES LATINE

interpretatas complectens:

STUDIO ET OPERA  
CORNELII KILIANI DVFFLÆI.

*Quid hic præstitum sit, Præfatio  
aa Lectorem docebit.*

Editio altera, priore auctior  
& correctior.



ANTVERPIÆ,  
Ex officina Christophori Plantini,  
Architypographi Regij.  
M. D. LXXXVIII.

What does a fish know about the water  
in which it swims all its life?  
Einstein

## 5. MARRO

### THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD MARRO

The etymological dictionary of Corominas (1985) says:

marrar

L'acc "Mena de Joc" <"ludus lapillis aciem effingens"> (Belv) és la que es documenta primer, i pot derivar també de "marrar" en el sentit de jugar exposant-se a marrar-la;

#### **Loose translation:**

“it is the one that was documented in the first place, and can also derive from the word ‘marrar’ in the sense of play, exposing to surround her”

Alcover mentions in his dictionary:

Joc antiq, semblant al de dames, del qual encara es conserva a record a Menorca

#### **Loose translation:**

“Old game, similar to checkers, of which there is still a memory in Menorca”

And gives three references: (Alcover, 1957 deel VII)

1. que nagan no gos jugar en la plassa.... en aço no és entès... joc de carn, ne de pex, ne encara festes de Nadal, ne joc de marro, St. Celoni, any 1370; (Boletín, 1901, XII:129; Kruijswijk, 1966:48)

**Loose translation:**

“1. That nobody enjoys playing in the square...this is not understood...game of corp, nor fish, nor even at Christmas parties, nor game of marro”

2. un taulell de fust de noguer ... de la una part apta a jugar escacs, e de l'altra a marro, Barcelona 1437. (Boletín, 1901, XI:158; Kruijswijk, 1966:48)

**Loose translation:**

“2. A woodboard of walnut...of a part made for playing chess, and the other one made for marro”

3. No gos ni presumesque ... jugar a ninguna manera de joch sinó a pilota de vent y xica, a marro y squachs. (Catalana, 1918, II:287; Kruijswijk, 1966:48)

**Loose translation:**

“3. Neither enjoy or presume of... play in any form of game but a ball of “vent and xica”, marro and chess”

In Aguiló's dictionary we see:

Diccionari *Aguiló*: (Aguiló, 1914-1934)

.....segons aquell, del joc vindria la figura heràldica descrita per *Eiximenis* (Castelló, 1957)

**Loose translation:**

“...according to him, from the game comes the heraldic figure described by Eiximenis”

According to Corominas (1989) Marro is a name for different games and Nebrija doesn't mention this word in his dictionary. However, it does figure the word *Marrar* which means “fail short” and “deviate from the right” (Nebrija, 1516). For more information on the etymology of this word we refer to the work of Dr. Arie Van der Stoep (Stoep, 1984: 160,164-165)

The word Marro de punta was the most usual in the ordinary language for the game of checkers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We found this term in the book of checkers of 1547 by Antonio de Torquemada (1547), in the work of Lorenzo Valls (1597), and in the treaty of Juan de Timoneda (1635a).

## DESCRIPTIONS OF MARRO IN LITERATURE

### 1379 THE ESCARBUNCLO (Riquer, 1986)

En Cataluña se comparaba el escarbunclo de Navarra con **el marro**, o tres en raya, juego infantil que se efectua sobre rayas señaladas en el suelo. Fra *Francesc Eiximenis*, en capitulos del Primer del Chrestia redactados entre 1379 y 1381, indica que el escudo del rey de Navarra es **ab forma de marro, ab speres** (= esferas, referencia al pomelado) **pel mig de les linyes del dit marro**. También Steve Tamborino, en el tratado heráldico que precede a su armorial de la Biblioteca Municipal de Tolosa del Languedoc, escribe: (Tamborino, 1516).

**Mes havem uns altres senyals nomenats escarboncles, axi com es lo marro de Navarra.**

#### Loose translation:

##### *Page 157*

In Cataluña the escarbunclo of Navarra was compared with the marro, or three in line, a children's game which was practiced over lines made in the ground. In the chapters of the First of the Chrestia written between 1379 and 1381 Fray *Francesc Eiximenis*, indicates that the shield of the King of Navarra is **ab form of marro ab speres** (=spheres, in reference to the pomelado) **pel mig de les linyes del dit marro** (in the middle of the lines of the marro). In the heraldic treaty that precedes the roll of arms of the Municipal Library of Tolosa of the Languedoc Steve Tamborino also writes: (Tamborino,1516)

**Mes havem uns altres senyals nomenats escarboncles, axi com es lo marro de Navarra** (there are other signs denominating escarboncles, so as the marro of Navarra)

##### *Página 153*

Lo que los españoles conocen como las cadenas de Navarra es un elemento que en heráldica ha recibido siempre el nombre de

**escarbunclo**, y sería una discusión bizantina debatir si se trata de una pieza o de una figura estilizada. Deriva este término del latín **carbunculus**, piedra preciosa; y en la Edad Media se creía que el carbunculo tenía el poder de irradiar luz durante la noche o en la oscuridad.

### **Loose translation:**

Page 153

What the Spaniards know as the chains of Navarra is an element that in heraldic has always received the name of *escarbunclo*, and it will take a byzantine discussion to debate if this is a piece or from a stylized figure. This term comes from the Latin word *carbunculus*, gemstone, and in the middle ages it was believed that the carbúnculo had the power to radiate light during the night or in the darkness.

### **1591 PEDRO RUIZ MONTERO**

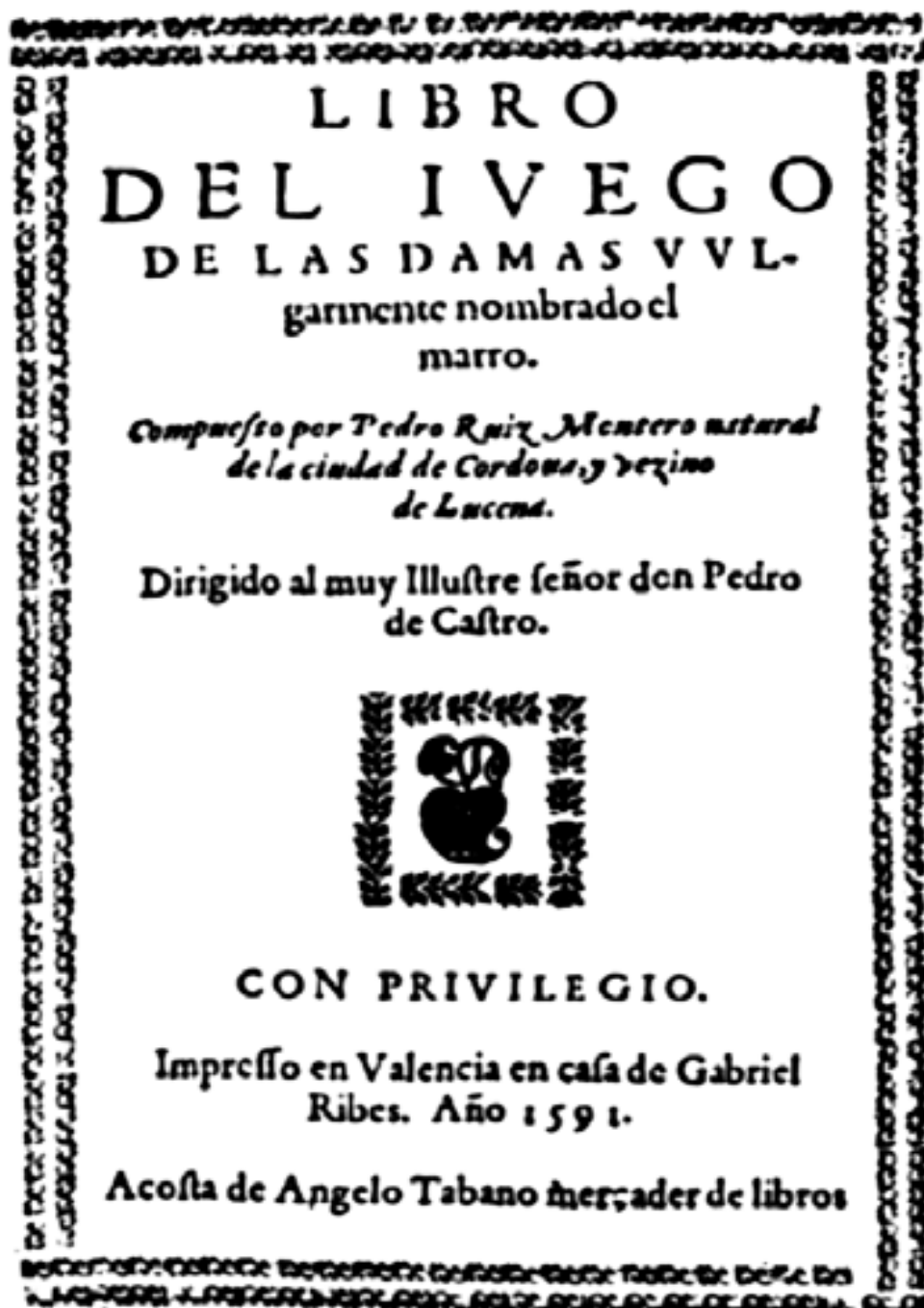
The oldest book that we found in the libraries is the work of Pedro Ruiz Montero (1591). He must have been a very good checkers player, given that in the manuscript of Alonso Guerra (Guerra, 1595), currently in possession of Victor Cantalapiedra Martín in Valladolid, Guerra says that Pedro Ruiz Montero had the nickname The Marro. It's strange that other authors, such as Antonio de Torquemada, Lorenzo Valls, and Juan de Timoneda talk in his book of **Marro de Punta**, while Pedro Ruiz Montero briefly evokes as The Marro in his book. On page 24 of his work we found the next phrase:

Otra que viene a ser tabla, aunque está en el libro que se imprimió en Valencia antiguamente, y la pone ganada, y yo hallo que es tabla sin ningun remedio por lo que lo dare a entender.

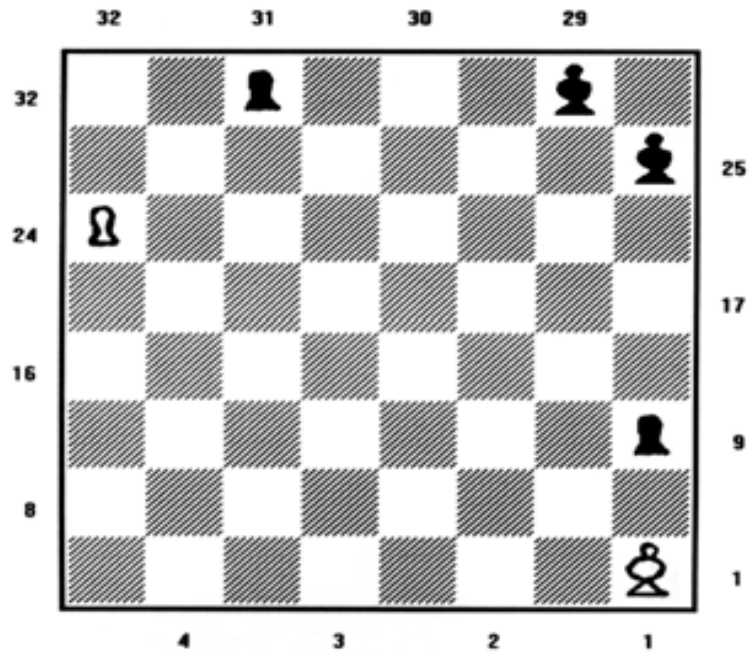
### **Loose translation:**



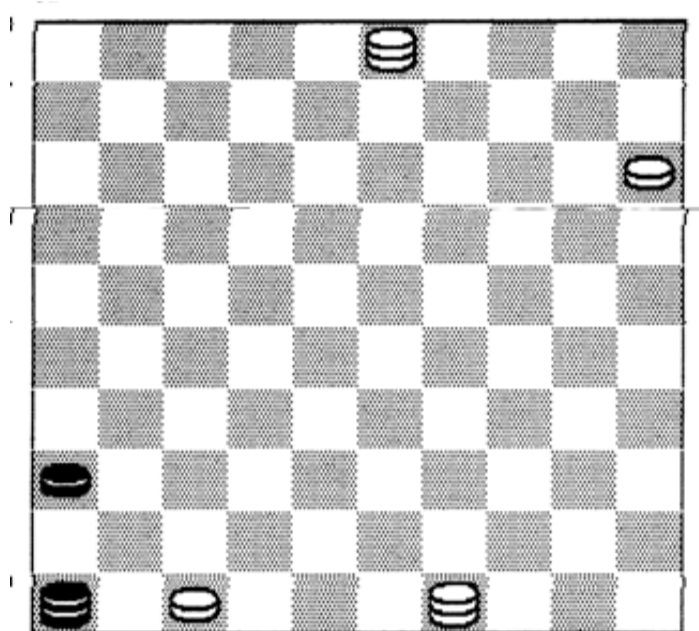
Another that comes to be a draw, although it is in the book that was printed in Valencia long ago, and put it as a win, and I find that is a draw for sure, so that I will make it understood.



The checkers book of Pedro Ruiz Montero 1591



**The oldest final in the history of checkers**



**Final moved to a board of 100 squares**

The position in the diagram has been played by *Kruijswijk* on a board of 100 squares with the next victory:

47-42! With two variants:

I. 46-23; 42-38, 36-41; 15-10 en 3-14. II. 36-41, 49-32, 41-47; 32-5 en 3-14!

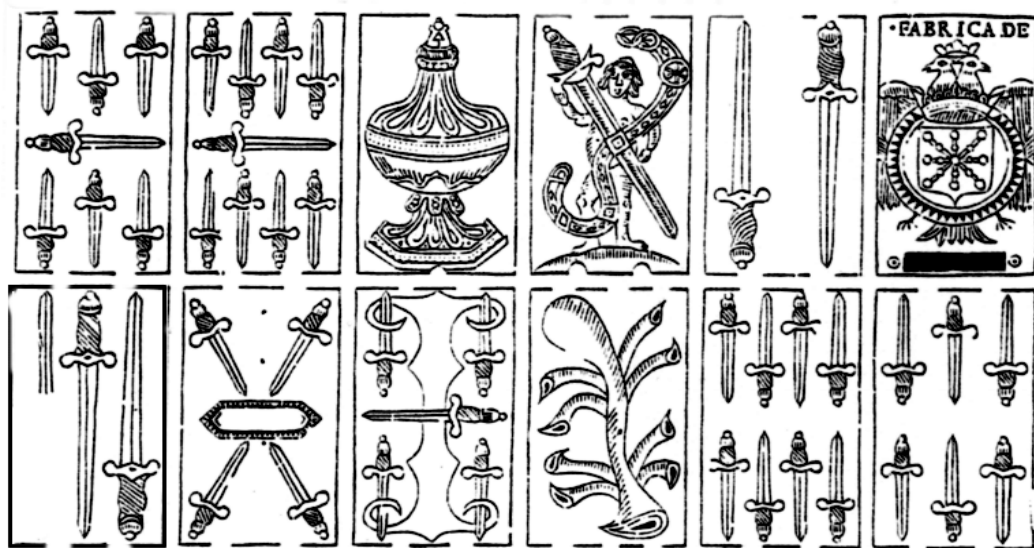
*Kruijswijk* (1966b:97) attributes this position to Antonio de Torquemada, who is the first author of a checkers book of 1547. It was published in Valencia where the first Spanish print was installed in 1474. Spain was the native country where the game of checkers began to flourish with the rule that was obligatory to eat. The Spanish game of checkers is characterized by two modern rules: the obligatory jump to eat the most, and the long lady, according to our famous historian and man of knowledge of finals, K.W. Kruijswijk.

Pedro Ruiz Montero says in his book that the position leads to a draw, but years later it was proved that the position was in fact a winner to the black ones.

### **c. 1600 FERNANDEZ OVIEDO**

A figure similar to this board c. 1600 Book Cám. Real de Fdz Oviedo (ms. T88, 1870) 147 147 note: another says Nauarra, and bring (the weapons) a marro or alquerque of gold chains in the field of gole vel sanguino. (Var. mas. E 110: bears on his shield the marro or alquerque of the gold chains) (Diccionario histórico, 1933-34, volumes 1 and 2)

This is an indication that alquerque and marro (de punta) were the same games over lines.



A Spanish set of cards from the seventeenth century

In the drawing that we see here is a weapon of Marro figure used by the factory of cards. So we can form an idea about what this weapon looked like in the past.

### 1630 CHRISTOVAL SUAREZ DE FIGUEROA (Suarez, 1630)

There is also an older edition of the **Plaza Universal** in 1615. A book comparable to this one was written by François Pomey (1667) which had several prints in various languages, among them one in Castilian, which discusses the game of checkers (Pomey, 1705; 1724).

### Page 271: of the players in universal, and in particular. Speech LXVL

p. 272: (...) Nuestros juegos de aora se dividen en pueriles, y de hombres. Los primeros son, peonça, castillejo, trompico, el bote, de alfileres, pares ò nones, medio celemin, la onda, el falta tu, el pasiabarbado, la puente, la gallina ciega, y otros. Los otros son santomocarro, los ladrones, los cautivos, guardarropa, **el marro**, velotto, chueca, las preguntas, la morra, la oca, el palillo, los Reyes:

los naypes con que se juega a primera, cientos y quinolas; al quinze, al treynta, a la flor, capadillo, tenderete, baças, triunfo, bueltos, polla, reynado, barciga, parar, pintillas, carteta, al rentoi, al cuco, mataban, y otros. Con la pelota se juega a la larga, a la cuerda, en la escalera, con la mano, con la pala, ò raqueta, ò con el braçal el valon. Iuegasse tambien el mallo, al castillo con la bala de ploma; al descarga el asno, la tablas reales, **a las damas, y ganapierde**, a las arenillas, y al ultimo al axedrez, obrando el Rey, la dama, los arfiles, los roques, los cavallos, y peones. Finalmente el libro del material atronado descubre galanamente los juegos de las vigiliass Seneses, que si agradaran, se podaran ver en su tratado. Lease acerca de los jugadores a Celio Rodiginio lb.10 de sus antiguas lecciones cap. 9 Celio Calcañino fol 287.292. y 294 y Alexandro de Alexandro lib. 3.c.21 de sus Dias geniales. y a Pedro Crinito lib. 17.c.3. y lib. 24.c.14 de honesta disciplina.

### Loose translation:

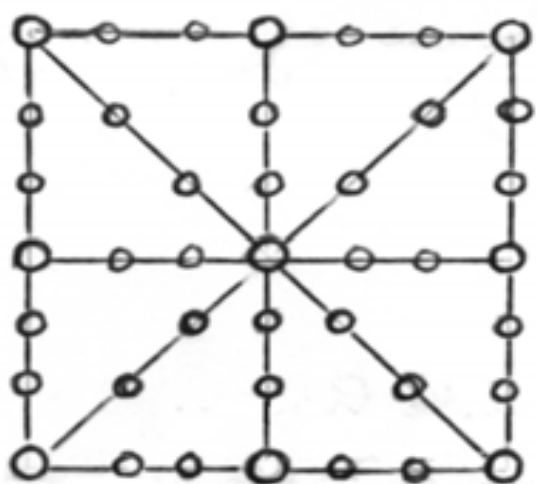
(...) one divides our current games into games for children and for adults. The first are *peonça, Castillejo, trompico, el bote, de alfileres, pares ò nones, medio celemin, la onda, el falta tu, el pasiabarbado, la puente, la gallina ciega*, and others. The others are *santomocarro, los ladrones, los cautivos, guardarropa, el marro, velotto, chueca, las preguntas, la morra, la oca, el palillo, los Reyes*: the cardgames are: *a primera, cientos y quinolas; al quinze, al treynta, a la flor, capadillo, tenderete, baças, triunfo, bueltos, polla, reynado, barciga, parar, pintillas, carteta, al rentoi, al cuco, mataban*, and others. Games played with the ball: *a la larga, a la cuerda, en la escalera, con la mano, con la pala, ò raqueta, ò con el braçal el valon*. More games to play are *el mallo, al castillo con la bala de ploma; al descarga el asno, la tablas reales, a las damas, y ganapierde* (Probably the giveaway game in checkers), *a las arenillas*, and finally chess, in which figure: the king, the lady (queen), the bishops, the towers, the horses, and the pawns. Finally in the book under outmoded matters we can see in a elegant way the games of Vigiliass Seneses, which are included in this treatise. Concerning the players read *Celio Rodriginio* (Rodigino,

1516) book 10, chapter 9, pp. 287, 292, and 294 lectures about the antiquity *Celio Calcañino* (Calcaginini, 1512; Calcagini, 1533; Calcagnini, 1538) and *Alexandro de Alexandro* (Alessandri, 1522) book 3, chapter 21 about his Dias geniales, and *Pedro Crinito's* book 17, chapter 3 and book 24, chapter 14 about honesta disciplina (Crinito, 1504).

## 1688 RANDLE HOLME

A comprehensive description of the weapons used by Marros from Navarre is found in Holme's book (1688, Book I):

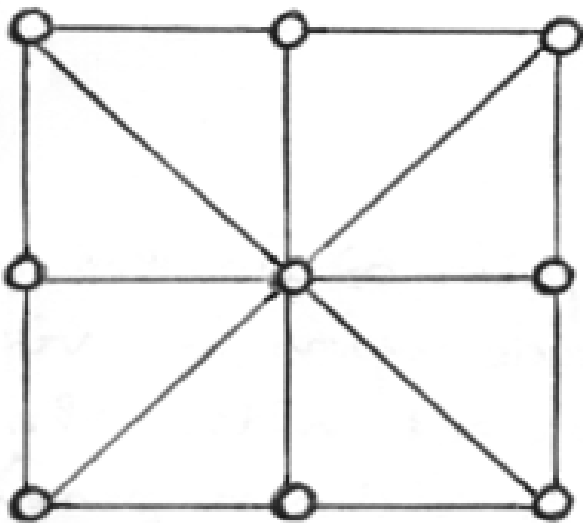
### Chapter 7: image on page 66, 67 and description of page 77



No. 118

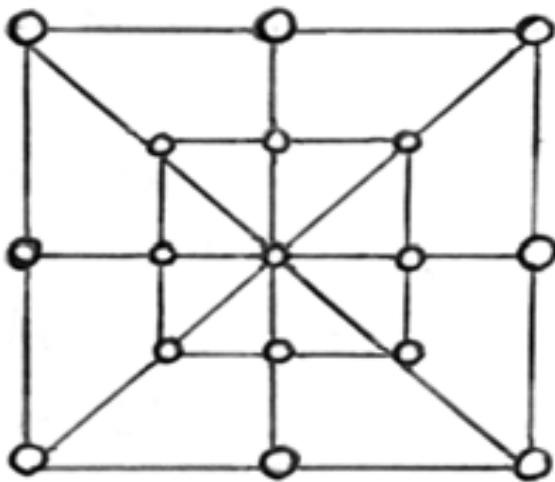
He beareth Argent, an Orle of Pellets chained, all fired to another in fesse Gyron-wise. This is born by the name of Nevaire. This is generally termed the Navarre Knot, being the Coat of that Kingdom; thus I have seen it drawn of old, but now it is otherwise, as you may see chap. 9, Nos. 32, 33.

**Chapter 9: image on pages 88, 89 and description on page 91**



**No. 32**

He beareth Gales 9 Annulets linked to each other in form of a Gyron (or Gyron wise) Or, This by the French Blazoned no otherwise than he beareth Navarre as being the coat of that Kingdom: though others term it 8 Annulets in Orle, linked to another in the Center, and each other Gyron-wise. This Chained Gyron belongs to the Arms of the Kingdom of Navarre.



**No. 33**

He beareth Gules, a Gordian Knott, or, else thus, a double Orle of Annulets linked to each other, and all to another in the Center, Gyron-Wise; or after the French, the Navarre Knot, or the double Knott of Navarre, being so born for the coat of Armour of that Kingdom.

- Orle = pillow, signifying Rest, Quietness, and Content.  
 Annulett = a ring, the emblem of Unity, Friendship, and love to eternity.  
 Giron = a lap, or the space between the thighs called the groin; the emblem of Unity, Peace, and Concord.

## 1690 ANTOINE FURETIÈRE

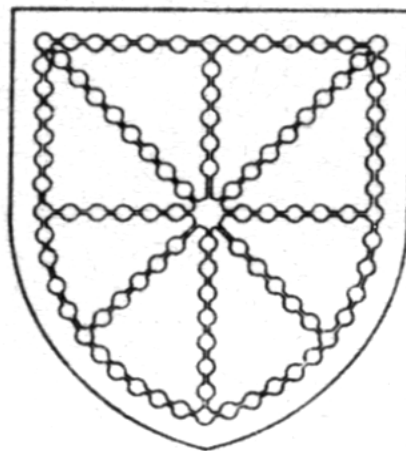
Merelle =

Jeu qu'on jouë sur un tablier distingué par plusieurs lignes, avec des **dames** ou autres marques, dont il s'en doit trouver un certain nombre en ligne droite. Le jeu de la **merelle** n'a de lieu que parmy les escoliers. Il est fort ancien, et vient de **marcella** et **madrellum**, d'où on a fait aussi **mareau**, comme prouve fort bien Menage. En termes de Blason, on dit que les anciens Rois de Navarre depuis Sanche le Fort ont porté pour Armes des chaisnes merelées, qui representent des **merelles**, quoy que plusiers Herauts les ayent prises pour des chaisnes et des rais **d'escarboucle**. (Furetière, 1690)

### Loose translation:

Moris =

Game played on a board divided along different lines, with checkers or other pieces of which one must find a certain amount on a straight line. This game of marro was played only by scholars. It is a very old game and comes from the words *marcella* and *madrellum*, from which derived the term *mareau*, as Menage firmly proves it. It is stated in the heraldry that the ancient kingdom of Navarre *Sancho el Fuerte* had chains in the shape of Marro's weapons, analogous to the game of marro (.....).



The weapon of Navarre



## **1732 THE AUTHORITIES' DICTIONARY**

In the Authorities' Dictionary (1732) we find a child's game that is a lot like our game of marro de punta.

«**Marro**. Significa tambien un juego parecido al que llaman de Moros y Christianos, en que puestos dos bandos de una parte y otra encontrados, dexando suficiente campo en medio, salen de uno y otro à coger o tocar al contrario: y el arte consiste en huir el cuerpo el uno al otro, para que no le cojan ò toquen, retirándose a su bando, porque si le tocan queda prisionero, por lo que le dieron este nombre».

### **Loose translation:**

«**Moris**. It is also like a game called Moors and Christians - Moros y Cristianos -, in which posts of both sides found either side, leaving enough room in between, going to either catch or touch the opponent, and its point is to run from each other so that they will not get caught or touched, retiring to his side, because if one gets touched, one becomes a prisoner, so it was given this name».

## **1759 M. DE SEJOURNANT**

Marro = Espèce de jeu de boule, Lat. disci ludus. (Sejournant, 1759)

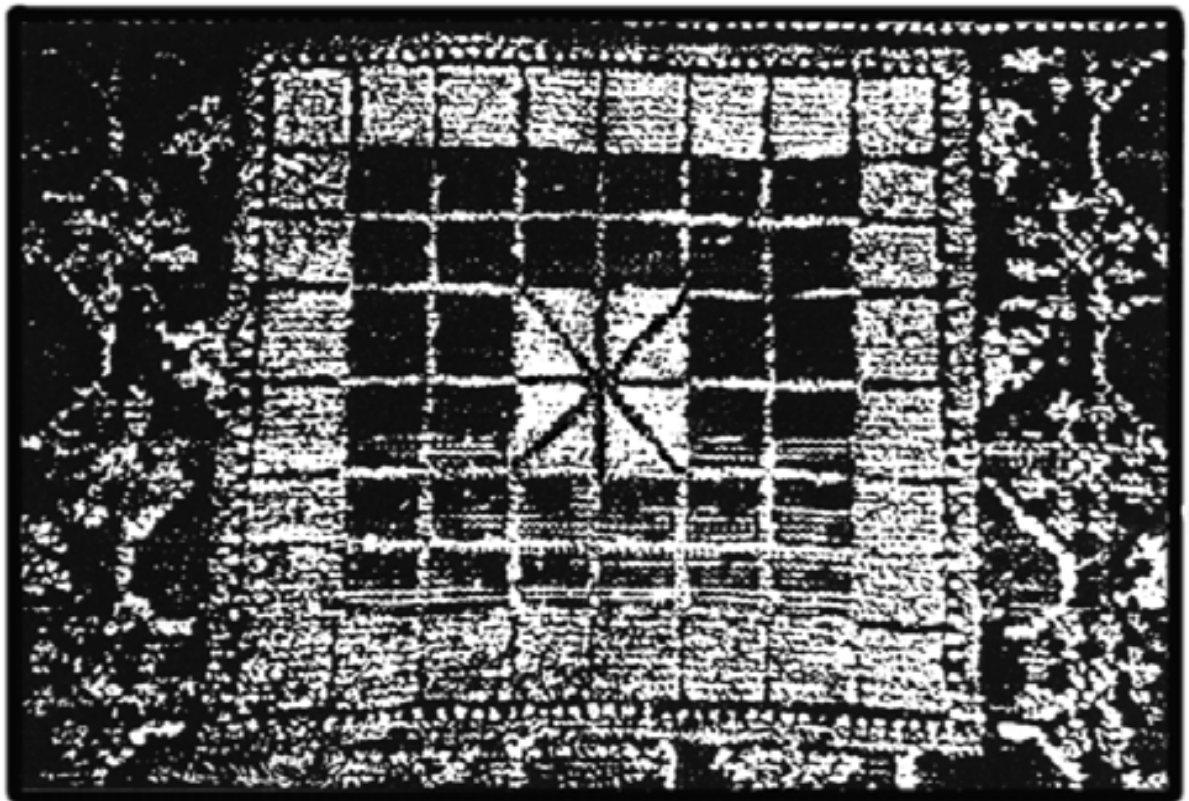
## **1786 J. BARETTI**

Marro = obs. want, a coit, or a game like coits (Baretti, 1786)

## MARRO TRANSFERS TO THE CHESSBOARD

The moris transferred from the moris board to the chessboard, from which comes the first game of checkers, which for us is none other than the game of Spanish checkers. It is not so difficult to understand if you look at the illustration below in which there appears a silk rug which experts date to the fourteenth century. This rug is currently in possession of a textile expert in Hong Kong.

The game board found in the rug clearly has a moris pattern. This recently discovered rug was made public during the meeting of leading historians of chess in the Max Euwe Centrum in Amsterdam (Whyld, 1993:1-9). Was it the shatranj?



**Unknown game board in a silk rug**

## CONCLUSION

**Marro** was a Catalan name used for the game of pieces in the period from 1283 to 1700. Other historians often use the tile game expression, but this does not seem right to me. In Spain it was played with some kind of pawns.

In the kingdom of Aragon any boardgame out of the various games that could be played on a striped board was known as *Marro*. We can bring here the games of alquerque-3, alquerque-9, and alquerque-12, which are the equivalent names in Castilian for all the various *Marro* games.

A noteworthy fact is that in Alonso Guerra's manuscript from around 1595 he refers to Pedro Ruiz Montero by the nickname The Marro. This manuscript (Guerra, 1595) is in possession of the checkers player Victor Cantalapiedra Martín from Valladolid.

In Sicily, which belonged to the Kingdom of Aragon, was played a game called *Marella* (Carrera, 1617: 32-37) back then, which apparently was a game none other than andarraya practiced on lines or stripes, which would probably later be called just alquerque.

Marro was sometimes used to refer to the game of Marro de Punta (Checkers). Marro is just a generic name and does not allow defining a game. This wasn't taken into consideration by Pedro Ruiz Montero in his book title, but it was by Lorenzo Valls, Antonio de Torquemada, and Juan de Timoneda. They all speak of Marro de Punta. The fact that Marro was used only by Pedro Ruiz Montero suggests that this was still the old name for the game of alquerque-12, as it is reflected by King Alfonso X the Wise. After the term Marro de Punta was used for a game of checkers on a lines board (checkerboard) and when it was moved to a chessboard, the name Marro de Punta was initially maintained until the new name *checkers* became really popular.

Critique is the key that opens the door to success  
Govert Westerveld

## 6. MARRO DE PUNTA

### THEORIES ABOUT THE TERM MARRO DE PUNTA

To present day this has been said about the term Marro de Punta:

#### **1912 *Branch*: (1911)**

**Marro de punta** = Merrils on the square, to distinguish from merrils on the line.

#### **1913 *Murray* (1913: 399)**

I have noted the following terms for **the square of the board**:

L. 3-6 punctum, 4-5 punctus: 1-5 tabula; 4-5 domus, 4 dommus; 4 campus; casa, cassa; quadrus; locus; 4-6 sedes, 4 seddes; 5 quadra; pirga. It. 4-6 punto; 6-scacco, 6 schacco; 6-casa. Sp. 3 casa; 5-punto; 9 escaque; casella. Pg. 9 quadrado. Fr. 2-5 point, 4 poynt; 7- case; 5 querreure; 6 cellule. Eng. 4 pointe, 5-6 poynt; cheker, 9 chequer (rare); 7-8 house; 8-square. Ger. 3-feld, 4-5 veld, 5 velt. Du. veld. Ic. 7-reitur. Sw. rutor, schackruta, fält. Cz. pole. Pol. kratka. Hun. negyszögör, koczka.

#### **1952 *Murray* (1952: 75)**

I have already shown that the chequered chessboard invited the transfer of other games on lined boards to the cells of one colour on the chessboard. This view is supported by the use of *marella* for draughts in Sicily (Carrera, 1617:36) and of *Marro de punta* in

Catalonia and Spain, which survived in vulgar use until as late as 1650 (Garcia, 1650).

***Kruijswijk 1966 (1966: 53):***

In middeleeuws Latijn werd de bordruit (van het schaakbord) en het bordpunt (van het lijnenbord) met diverse termen aangeduid, t.w. **punctus, punctum, tabula, domus, campus, casa, quadrus, locus en sedes**. Van al deze termen waren **punctus** (met als meervoud **puncti**) en **punctum** (met als meervoud **puncta**) het meest verbreid. De Spaanse vorm **punta** (meervoud) is afkomstig uit het Catalaanse taalgebied en niet uit het Kastiliaans-Spaans, waarin de voorkeur is uitgegaan naar de term *casa*. Het Spaanse damspel is tot ontwikkeling en bloei gekomen in het Catalaanse taalgebied met Valencia als centrum. Aangezien het alquerquebord, dat is samengesteld uit vier kleine molenborden, als een gecompliceerd molenbord werd beschouwd, viel het alquerque-spel onder de verzamelnaam van de molenspelen, die in het Catalaanse taalgebied **marro** werden genoemd. Dit waren louter lijnenbordspelen, zodat de toevoeging **de punta** betrekking moet hebben op de ruiten van het schaakbord en niet op de punten van het lijnenbord. Dienovereenkomstig moet de damspelbenaming *marro de punta* letterlijk betekenen: molenbordspel op ruiten. Als synoniem van *damas* kan hiermee niet anders bedoeld zijn dat het tot damspel getransformeerde alquerque-spel op de velden van het Europese schaakbord.

**Loose translation:**

In Medieval Latin it was indicated with the term *checkered board* (chessboard) and the intersection (of the panel lines) with various terms, namely *punctus, punctum, tabula, domus, campus, house, Quadrus, locus in offices*. Of all these terms *punctus* (in plural *Puncti*) and *punctum* (in plural *puncta*) were the most common. The Spanish spelling *punta* is native to the region of the Catalan language and not of the Castilian regional use where *house* was the preferred term. The

game of checkers in Spain developed and flourished in the Catalan linguistic region with Valencia as his center. As the board of alquerque (of 12), consisting of four panels of alquerque of 3, was considered a complex board of alquerque, the game of alquerque (of 12) was cataloged under the collective name games of alquerque and, in the Catalan linguistic region, under the collective name of *marro*. These were only boards of lines, but the addition of the expression *de punta* should refer to the squares of chess and not to the point of lines of the board. Thus the name of *marro de punta* literally meant alquerque game on squares.

The synonym of damas is thus nothing else than the alquerque game transformed to checkers on the squares of the European chessboard.

### **1981 Dr. A. van der Stoep (1984: 81)**

Punto meant square of the chessboard, so *Marro de punta* may be interpreted literally as alquerque on a chequered board.

## **DE PUNTA MEANS DIAGONALLY**

In 1993 I proposed to Rob Jansen to conduct a study on the meaning of the *Marro de Punta* proposition. At first Jansen said that they knew enough about the meaning of these words. Fortunately he later agreed with my idea of looking for more and the data he obtained were instrumental in breaking down traditional theories of the aforementioned historians.

Even in 1993 after gathering some data Jansen already wondered if it was not more logical to translate the word *punta* (in *Marro de Punta*) by the idea above angle or angle above cusps or something similar. In the game of alquerque you can move in all directions in contrast to the new *Marro de Punta* where the pieces only move diagonally forward.

Later Jansen perceived in the words *Marro de Punta* a sense of a hobby played above points of the intersection, but I found that description too limited, because the game of alquerque of 12 was also played on intersection points (of lines). My opinion was that *Marro de Punta* had to be something different from all the games of alquerque or marro. I liked more his other idea of a diagonal game. While it was taking as a starting point the fact that all games of Marro, including Marro de Punta, were hobbies where they played on lines and intersections, the words de punta seem to me to refer to a game in diagonal direction. But at that time we had no documentary evidence that could test our hypothesis true. This possibility could finally be checked with Jansen's discovery of a Catalan translation in the fifteenth century of the famous chess book of Jacobus de Cessolis! De punta did not mean anything other than diagonal. Here we have a proof that the Spanish checkers game of Marro de Punta had terms that were also daily used in the Spanish world of chess!

### **Etymology of the word Marro**

For more information about the etymology of this word we refer to the chapter on marro of the outstanding book of checkers history by *Dr. A. Van der Stoep* (1984: 160, 164-165).

### **The etymology of the words PUNTA and PUNTO**

In current Castilian we know two words that sound almost the same: *punto en punta*.

Most people are likely to translate the word *punta* within the group of words *marro de punta* as the Latin word *punctum* and reflect it later as the checkers game on boxes or squares. But we have in Castilian two almost identical terms and that's why the game of marro de punta deserves more detailed explanation.

### - Punto

**Punto** derived from the Latin word *punctum* and means extreme. The first evidence of this word is found in the time of "El Cid" in the eleventh century. (Corominas, 1989) But the dictionary of the great Antonio de Nebrija (1495) says little about the word punto and more about the word punta.

### - Punta

**Punta** is a Spanish word, also born in the eleventh century and means among other things the end of something, especially if it is sharp. It also means tip, peak, the point of a bayonet (Corominas, 1989). In the dictionary of Antonio de Nebrija (1495) we found tip, acute thing. We also can't ignore that punta is used as an end point formed by an angle (Dictionary of Authorities, 1732). In Castilian *de punta a punta* loosely translated means from end to end. It should be known that punta figuratively means the same as acuity (Great Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, 1989). Then we also understand the term *quick wit*. The best explanation of the word punta is:

«By extensión is the end of something that ends forming an angle: as the tip of the toe, the tip of the bench. Lat. Cuspis, Angulus». (Dictionary of Authorities, 1732)



## THE SPANISH CHESS LITERATURE BEFORE THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

If the books of checkers do not clarify what the term Marro de Punta means, then the chess books before the fifteenth century must give us the solution and so we have carefully studied the Valencian word punt and Spanish words punto, postpunta, and punta.

### - Punt

This Valencian Word is contained in the manuscript of Scachs d'amor (Vinyoles, 1497), written by Narcís Vinyoles around 1497, as we see:

Lo Rey juga hun punt lo seu Peó.

(Castilian: The King moves a point [step])

**Juga lo Cavall de Dama a dos puts de Dama** (read puts = punts)

(Castilian: Play the horse of lady at two points of the lady)

**Lo Rey se cobre del Cavall, a dos punts de Dama**

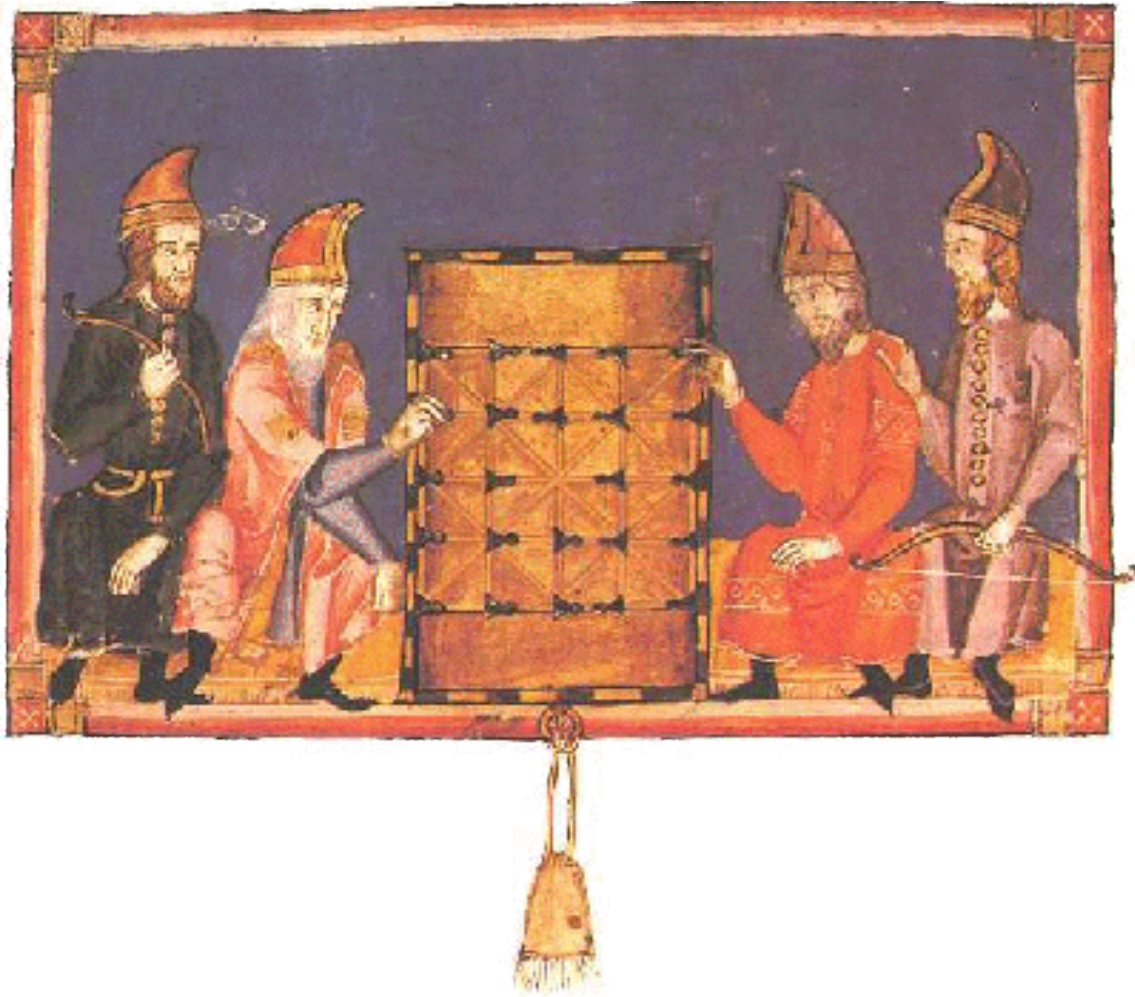
(Castilian: The King covers of the horse, at two points of Lady)

*Paluzie and Lucena* (1912a; 1912b; 1912c; 1912d; 1921) wrote extensively on this manuscript. It was also addressed by *Miquel and Planas* (1911-1914, volume I: 413-440) and *Ribelles* (1915: 275-297).



**Narcís Vinyoles as a woodcut of 1497**

The Valencian word (Aragon) **punt** then also had the meaning of square in the tenth century. But had this also been the case before that date? It seemed much more likely that the word **punt** was used for intersections that were formed to play the game on a board of lines.



**The Alquerque 12 Game in 1283**

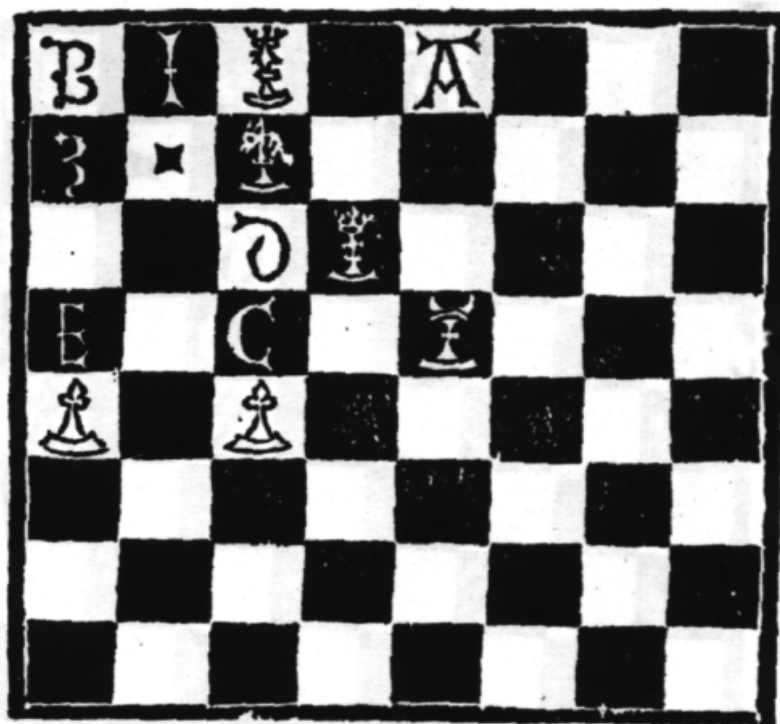
In the adjacent image we can see the Alquerque 12 Board where little squares are shown (meaning points); over them the pawns were placed and their movement happened.

No matter what it actually was, the translation for the Catalan and Valencian word *punt* into Spanish is still *punto* (point) and not *punta* (tip).

### **Point (Punto)**

This word was used in Lucena's chess book (1497) and in this case its meaning was not referring to *box* or *square*, since for such purpose the word was *house* (Sp. *casa*), but meaning point (In Latin *punctum*).

On the other hand, in the old Valencian text *Scachs d'amor* we can see how the Catalan Word *punt* was used to mean box or square. It must be said that in the fifteenth century people from Catalonia spoke Catalan as well as people from Valencia and the Balearic Islands. Today the Valencian language is different, but its differences from the Catalan tongue are very few. Going back to the Catalan word *punt*, its meaning in Castile is also point and not tip.



Repetición: de amo  
res: Arte de apetre  
con. el. juegos de  
partido.

Diagram with one point in a white square – from Lucena's chess book of 1497

That is the reason why when referring to the squares *Marro de punto* (Alquerque) was the expected term and not *Marro de punta*, the term that we know. Many historians say that Alquerque is nothing but a checkers game over squares, as the chessboard. But it seems that for etymological reasons there are clear differences, because if not, the name of the game would be *Marro de punto*.

### **- Postpunta**

In the book by *Alfonso X The Wise* (1283/1987) the orbit of action and the movements of the different chess pieces are shown in a separate chapter and the word *postpunta* is used, referring to the bishop's movement.

Los alfiles saltan a tres casas en pospunta a semejança de los elefantes que traíen entonce los reyes,...

### **Loose translation:**

- The bishops jumping over three squares go in oblique direction, like the elephants, which were brought by the Kings, .....

### **Also here (Alfonso, 1283/1987:245)**

E si tomando las casas firiere el uno al otro una tabla o más, dévelas tornar, no a la quadra quel está en derecho ni a la casa quel está de lado, más a la quel está en pospunta e desque las metiere en esta quadra,...

### **Loose translation:**

And when at jumping over squares, one player captures one or more pieces, he should capture the conquest pieces, not over straight squares, nor over lateral squares, but over the opposite oblique squares.



**King Alfonso X The Wise**

Here we can see a clear difference between the words houses or *quadras* (both meaning squares) and the word *pospunta* that can be loosely translated as obliquely up angle or in oblique up direction.



**Book by Alfonso X The Wise, 1283**



## FOREIGN EXPRESSIONS RELATED TO ‘TIP’

The Spanish expressions *pospunta* or *postpunta* are the closest in meaning to the word tip. *Postpunta* dates from 1283. Therefore in order to obtain a better conception of *postpunta*, as well as *punta* it is worth focusing on other medieval translations related to chess literature written overseas.

Two texts from medieval German translations are shown below:

### **Vom Gange der Alten** (Schmidt, 1961:122)

“Es ist auch tzw wissen, dat die alden alltzeit vom dem dritten veld auf das dritt gen schüllen auf dem schachtzabel, vber ekk; der weisz ald auf weizzen veldern vnd der swartz ald auf swartzen veldern. Und ir gankch vber ekch pedäwtt, da sy sicherhait in iren gengen haben schüllen”.

### **Loose translation:**

About the movement of the former bishops.

It must also be noted that the old bishops moved on the chessboard diagonally from their own square to the third square; the White bishops through the White squares and the Black bishops through the black squares. Their diagonal movement means they shine while moving forward safely.

### **Meister Ingold** (Massmann, 1983:140)

"des alten gang ist an dat dritt feld und nit ferrer, und das selb soll seyn uber die spicz". (spitz)

### **Loose translation:**

The old movement is to the third square without going any farther, over the angles (diagonally).

From a thesis by G.H. v. Avelingh dated 1912 we take three references about the diagonal direction of chess pieces. This thesis is a Dutch translation from Jacobus de Cessolis taken from a manuscript printed in 1473 in Utrecht with the title:

*Liber de moribus hominum et officiis nobilium ac Popularium super ludo scacchorum.*

### **Dat Scaecspel (Schaick, 1912)**

#### **- Over de Loper: (p. 41)**

"Hier omme is dattie rechter oude, als hi eerst wtgaet, soe mach hi van zinen eygenen velde overhoec, aen die rechter zyde, op dat derde velt, voor den ackerman gaen staen".

#### **Loose Translation:**

About the Bishop

And that is why the former bishop from the right side must take place from its own square first, diagonally, to the right, in the third square and in front of the pawn.

#### **- Over de toren: (p. 93)**

So moghen si over alle, recht als een coninc dat rijc door riden ende also wel op een wit velt, als op een zwert velt gaen staen. Ende is datsi midden int velt staen, so moghen si recht wt voorwaerder of after werder aen die lüfter zijde of aen die rechter zijde gaen, mer nemmermeer over hoec.

#### **Loose Translation:**

- About the Rook:

They can move widely in a straight line, like a King through the kingdom, taking place in a white or a black square as well. And if they are in the middle of the board, they can move vertically forward or



backward; horizontally, to the left, or to the right, but never in a diagonal way.

**- Over de pionnen: (p. 159/160)**

Altoos zullen si recht wt gaen zonder wederkeren, het en si, dat van horen vianden hem enich moetedē, die horen heer of hem scaden wilden. Die zullen si over hoecke vangen of dootslaen.

**Loose Translation:**

About the Pawns:

They always have to move vertically without going back, except when they face their enemies wanting to harm them. These must be captured diagonally or killed.



An English translation from 1475 gives us the following information:

**The yssuyngē of the Alphyn (Caxton, 1474)**

“And ye shall understande that the alphyn goth alleway cornerwyse frō the thirde poynt to the thirde poynt kepyngē all way his owne siege/ For yf he be black/ he goth all way black / and yf he be whyte he goth alleway whyte. The yssue or goyngē cornerly or angularly signefieth cautele or subtylyte/ which iuges ought to haue”.

**Jacobus de Cessolis**

With this text it makes sense to translate the game of Marro de Punta with special reference to the words "diagonal" or "over cusps". In

alquerque of 12 one can move in all directions, contrary to the new game of Marro de Punta, in which pawns can only move diagonally.

For the damista nation of Friesland it is also interesting to know that the words *Overhoeks* (Diagonal) and *over allen* (Above all ....) come from medieval times.

The most splendid proof was undoubtedly the source found by Rob Jansen in 1995, which contains the words de punta. This was the case of a fifteenth-century Catalan translation of a Latin chess manuscript made by Jacobus de Cessolis (Bofarull, 1902):

p. 111 **Del moviment dels pehons:**

(.....), aquel poden prendre de punta, per ço com aquells adversaris los contrasten

**Loose translation:**

(...) they could capture "de punta –as a tip-" (oblique), because for that their adversaries contrast them

p. 111 **Del moviment dels Rochs:**

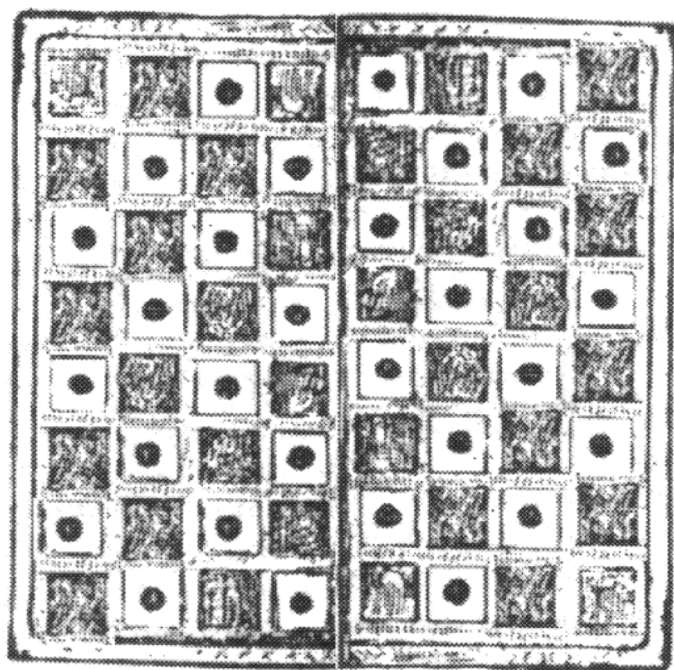
(.....) E sabedora cosa es que los Rochs null temps no van de punta, mas de plà, (sia que davant vagen o que se-n tornen)

**Loose translation:**

(...) It is known that towers cannot move as a tip (oblique), but in a straight line (either to go forward or backward)

## POINTS, INTERSECTIONS, AND CROSSES ON THE GAME BOARDS

There are other references about *points*, which should be talked about here. Including those found in the image of the chess-tables board (Stoep, 1984: 40). This board from the sixteenth century is exposed in the museum of industrial art in Vienna. Here we can find *points* in the white squares. Apparently in those days not only in Spain but also in other countries it was mainly played on white squares for reasons of lack of light. It's only from the nineteenth century that this rule was changed to playing in the black squares, so it can be justified that in some countries the large diagonal (the "big street") is on the right side of the board while in other countries it's on the left.



Even today we find in Spain an ornately decorated board of chess or draughts where there are, in the beautiful white squares, some decorated *points*, which occupy at least 30% of the white squares.

**Chess/tables board XVI century**

Different game boards are described in the work of Burckhardt (1893), Wichmann (1960), Himmelheber (1972, 1988), Schürmann (1980) and Wilckens (1985, 1986). On the other things, going back to the Vienna board it seems that the great diagonal is to the left for the white squares and to the right for the black squares.

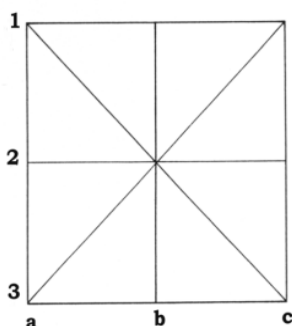
Therefore it seems that the ladies - queens - were played with the big diagonal to the left. But as mentioned above, the *points* only refer to the diagonal direction of Marro de punta. If the points really had to do with the squares, then the game should have been called Marro de punta.

What are the odds that can be in a game that uses the expression *punta - tip*?

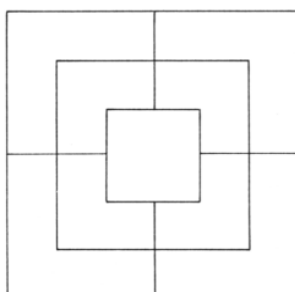
1. With the game of Marro de punta it was intended to describe a game where acute points were used in the direction of intersection points.
2. The game of Marro de punta was used to refer to a game, in which the direction was diagonal (towards an end).
3. Marro de punta wanted to express a reference to a game with the generic name Marro in the sense of ingenuity acuteness.

As the term *ingenuity* is found in the title of the first book of checkers, it is logical to assume that the term *punta* (tip) did not refer to the acuteness. So we are only left with the first two possibilities.

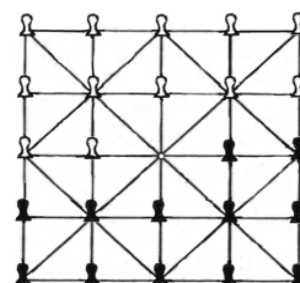
But were there any games that had to do with acute *points* in the late sixteenth century? Well, yes, they really existed! Different alquerque games were played, which were already described in the book of *Alfonso X The Wise*: Alquerque of three, alquerque of nine, and alquerque of twelve.



**Alquerque 3**

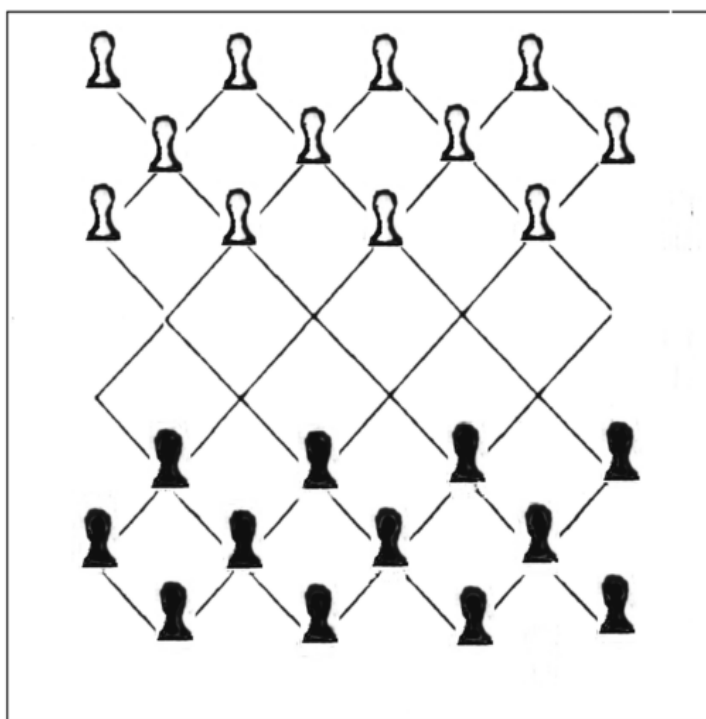


**Alquerque 9**



**Alquerque 12**

But then there was another game that was played over stripes and with acute *points* - andarraya. Also, in this game a pawn was placed in the four corners of a certain stripe within the same board and at the two ends when the pawns were on the verge of it. But with the term Marro de punta they wanted to reflect a game played differently than other alquerque games. Therefore playing in *acute points* or *intersection points* could never have been a complete reflection of the game of Marro de punta. Then it's appropriate to think that this is a game of diagonal direction.



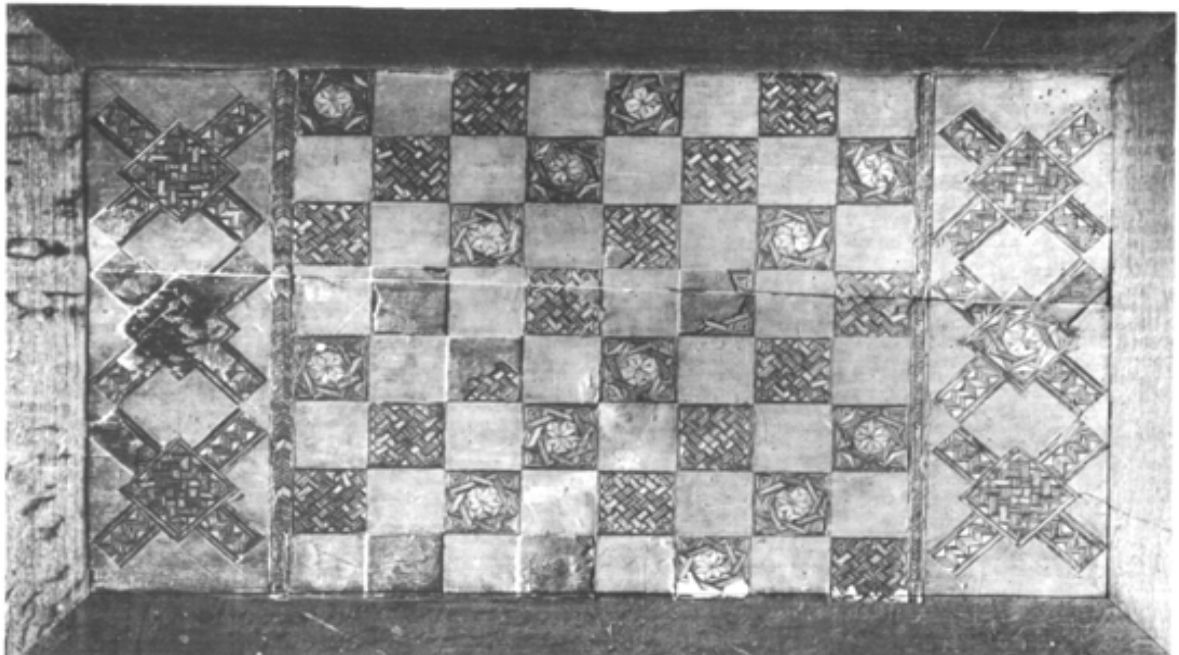
**Andarraya**

More interesting and much more logical seems the board of Jan van Leiden (Bakker, 1984: 17) which apparently dates back around the year 1500 (Geisberg 1937, Volume 5: 189, Kreisel, 1968: 36). Here the term of the board game Marro de Punta is more detailed. We see on the board, left and right, the real meaning of the fact explained earlier that four stripes in the game of andarraya formed the end on

which was then placed a pawn. These crosses indicated the diagonal direction on the chessboard, as also happened in the game of andarraya.



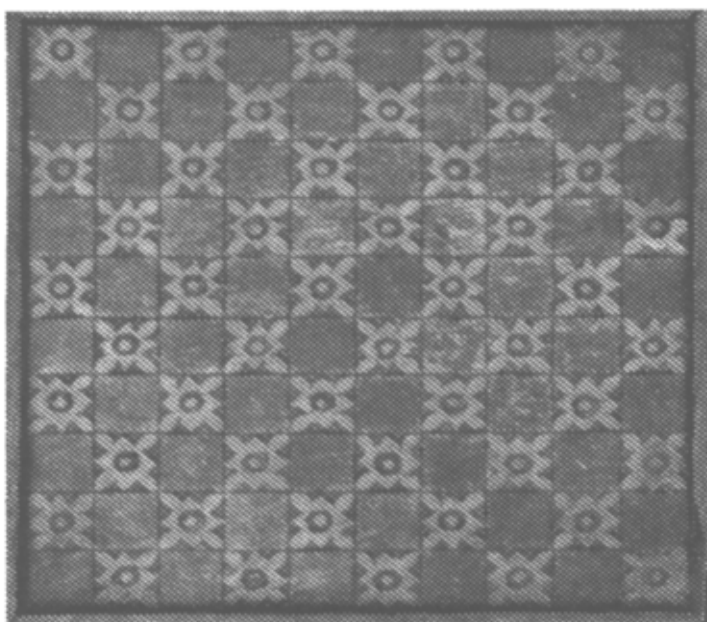
**Jan van Leiden**



**Checkerboard Jan van Leiden**

It seems as if they wanted to indicate on this board that this was the new game of andarraya and that it could now be played on a chessboard, instead of the old board of stripes. It is curious that here not all squares have points and that the black squares already have the right diagonal, as in the Spanish game of checkers.

We get a much better understanding of the ancient game of andarraya transferred to a chessboard, if we look at the Checkerboard of 1724. (Bakker, 1985: 71).



**Frisian checkerboard of 1724**

If we forget that this is a board of 100 squares, we understand immediately what the game of andarraya was like in antiquity. Also in this panel we see the progress of the parts and have a game of streaks. Moreover, here the squares where we play are white with dots, and the great diagonal is on the right, as in the Spanish game. A characteristic of this game is that if we ignore the stripes, we are left with the points in the squares; that is the case of the chessboard of Vienna mentioned earlier. (Stoep, 1984: 40).

The term andarraya was already known in Castilla in the fifteenth century, but in the same century we can't find any information in the crown of Aragon about the game of Marro de punta. This happens in the sixteenth century. Therefore it remains a mystery whether the game of andarraya, (Nebrija, 1495, Westerveld, 1992: 38) is played in 1495 on the same board of lines and then obtains the name of Marro de Punta, or if the chessboard was used for the game of andarraya, receiving the name Marro de Punta. At the moment I take the hypothesis that Marro de Punta initially had the same diagonal line board as the game of andarraya.



**Elio Antonio de Nebrija**



An image of the sixteenth century is preserved of the famous Elio Antonio de Nebrija, who in his 1495 dictionary cites the term game of andarraya with NOVUM (new). (Nebrija, 1495).

Maybe it's a coincidence that we find a nuanced floor in the adjacent image and that above them appear drawings of crosses in diagonal direction. Maybe it was something that was used in those years.

Nebrija (1444-1522) was a prominent Spanish humanist who was appointed professor of the Latin language at the University of Salamanca and later in Alcala de Henares. He was the author of several dictionaries unmatched by any of his contemporaries.

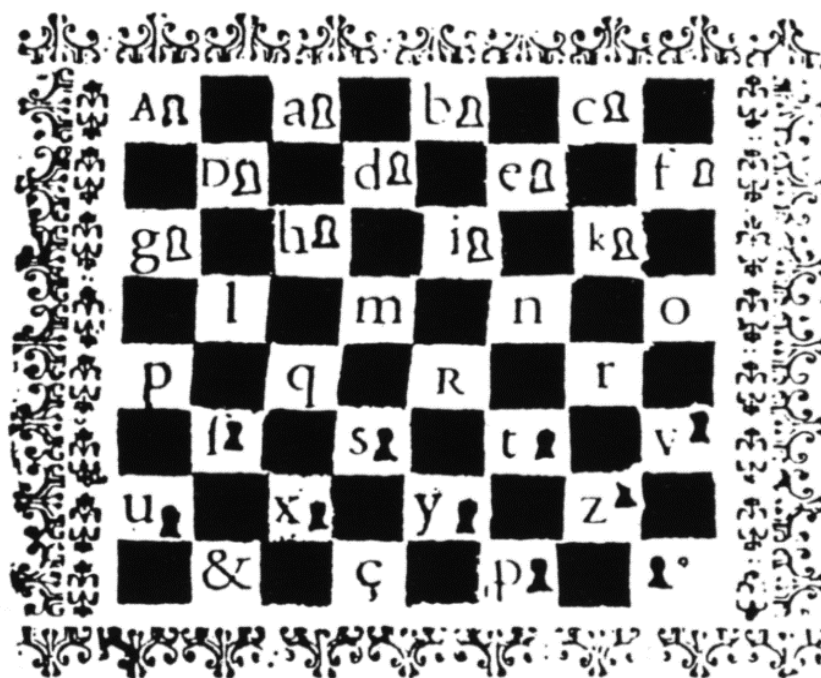
## **SPANISH BOOKS OF CHECKERS WITH THE TERM OF MARRO DE PUNTA**

**Spanish** books on checkers bearing the term Marro de Punta come from the following authors: Antonio de Torquemada (1547), Juan de Timoneda (1635), and Lorenzo Valls (1597). It is curious that the book of checkers of Pedro Ruiz Montero (1591) only carries the term of Marro, which is otherwise proof that the checkers game originated from the game of Marro. The game of Marro was the Aragonese name for the Castilian game of alquerque. The checkers game described in these books is played on a chessboard

## **THE PIECES IN MARRO DE PUNTA**

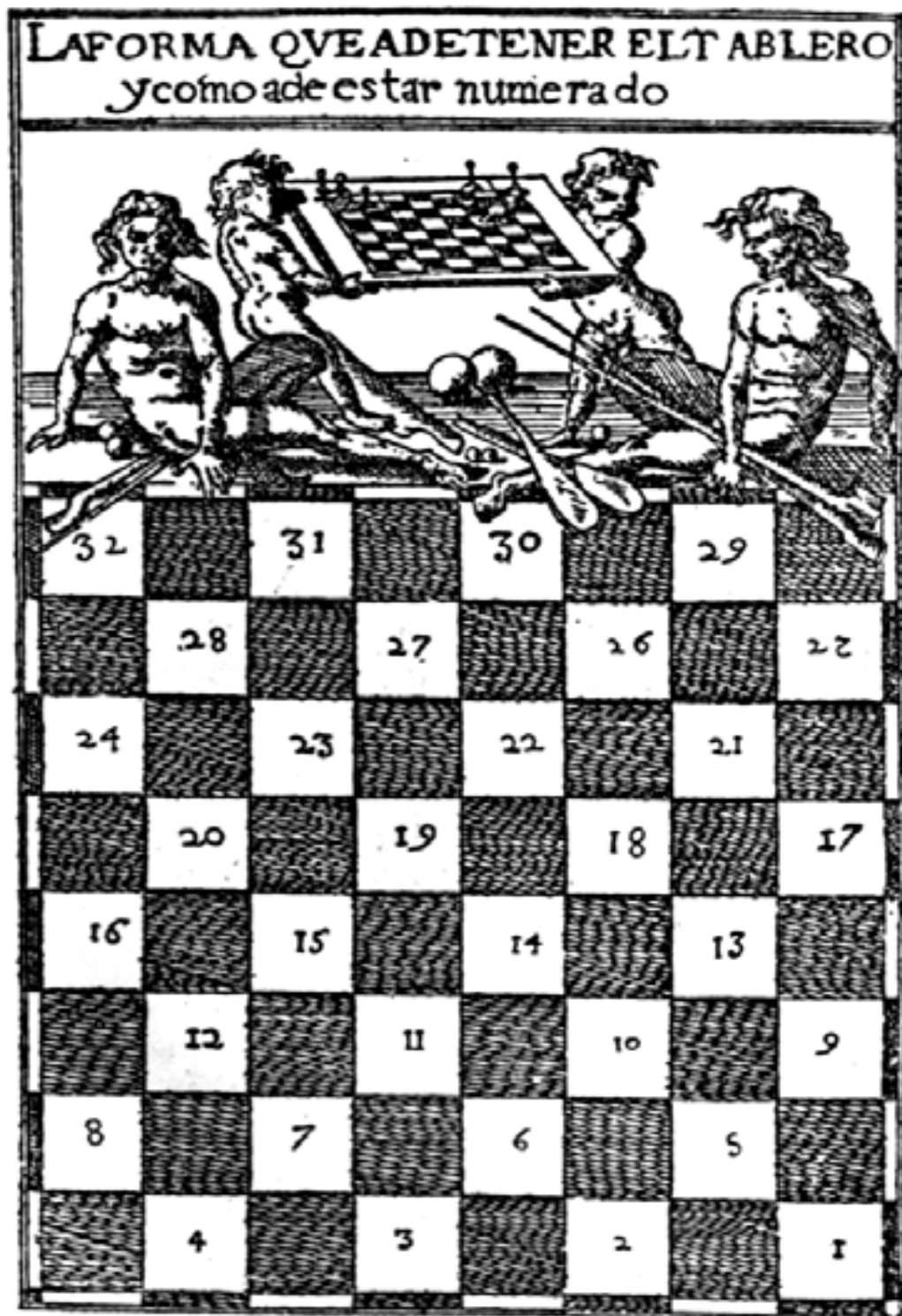
In the game of **Marro de Punta** the same pieces were employed as those of Alquerque of 12. They were called *trebejos* at the time of King Alfonso X the Wise. As The King indicated at that time, the pieces were similar to the pawns in chess. The same pieces were

employed in Marro de Punta, but instead of *trebejo* the word Pawn was used. The name of the chess piece was used in this way in Marro the Punta in Spain.



**Initial Position in the Juan de Timoneda's Checkers book, 1635**

In Juan de Timoneda's book from 1550 or even earlier there are many checkers diagrams. In one of them we can see the initial position of the pieces or pawns. Contrary to what happened in other countries of Spain's, the game was played with pawns for a long time. Proof of that are the various dictionaries as well as an illustration which can be found in the Checkers Game Book by Joseph Carlos Garcez from 1684. For how long these chess pieces were used to play checkers in Spain is still a mystery. The pawns were probably used until 1700 on the alquerque board and the chessboard as well to play checkers. The French influence over the use of chips came gradually and I suppose it was crucial from 1700. Whatever the process was, in Spanish checkers literature the name for the chip is Pawn.



Pawns used in The Checkers Game Book by Joseph Carlos Garcez, 1684.

The pieces in the different checkers games: andarraia, alquerque, and checkers resulted in a great deal of confusion overseas, since the translated name given to it was Chess.



Checkers Book by Lorenzo Valls, 1597

LIBRO  
LLAMADO  
INGENIO, EL  
QVAL TRATA DEL  
luego del Marro de punta,  
hecho por Iuan Timoneda.

DEDICADO AL MVY  
*magnifico Senñor don YNNICO*  
*de Losca Capitan en las*  
*Galeras de España.*

AL QVAL SE HAN ANNADIDC  
ocho trechas de mucha primor, por  
Antonio Miron y del Castillo.



EN TOLOSA,

En Casa de Iuan Boudé, Impressor ordinario  
de su Majestat. 1635

Checkers Book by Juan de Timoneda, 1635

For instance, we see in the Arnaldo de la Porte dictionary (1659)

<b>Spanish:</b>	<b>Flemish:</b>
Axedrez	schaek-spel
Alquerque	schaek-spel (it is translated as Chess too)
Andaraia	seker schaek-spel (certain Chess game)

<b>Flemish:</b>	<b>Spanish:</b>
Schaek-schijve	pieça de alquerque (Flemish: Chess piece)
Damespel	juego de axedres o de damas (Checkers game is expected here)
Schaek-spel	juego de damas, tablas (Chess game is expected here)

As we can see, its characteristics were related to as many as four games; because of the usage of pawns it was erroneously catalogued as a chess game, for at least three games: checkers, andarraia, and alquerque, and chess. Three of these games were known as checkers' variations. And all this without mention of **Marro de Punta**, which was also played with chess pawns.

## CONCLUSION

We can have doubts about the argument that **Marro the Punta** refers to just one game over squares. *Marro*, a Catalan word which is barely used today, was described many times between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries as a generic name for similar board games. It is highly likely that its omission in Torquemada was intentional, since this was a cleverness game and in the Torquemada book appeared El Ingenio, indicating similar things. This game had nothing to do with a tip game (*Juego de Punta*) (Jansen 1993a Issue 30:15-16) which used intersection crosses which fitted in many games. With the term *Marro de Punta* the idea was precisely to separate it from the others and make clear in the sixteenth century that it was a new *Marro* Game with a determined direction. The name *Marro de Punta* could be developed gradually after 1495 as a Valencian name for the new *andarraya* game (Westerveld, 1992:38) meaning Pawns settled in the four strips extremes, crowning the new powerful lady (Bakker, 1983:44; Bakker 1987: 42-43), played in a diagonal direction over the old *andarraya* board with diagonal strips.

However, if we value all the data, the most logical thought is that *Marro de Punta* did not refer to anything but *andarraya* practiced over a stripped board, with exclusive diagonal direction movement, and with the use of the new powerful lady. In this case the term *Marro* had the meaning of a game practiced over strips and intersection crosses while the *Punta* term had the sense of a diagonal direction. Therefore *Marro de Punta* was a stripped diagonal game which later changed to a chessboard and during the first years of introduction kept its name. It was very probable that this game acquired the name Checkers or Checkers Game during the second part of the the sixteenth century in Spain (under the French influence?).

The pieces used in the different Checkers games: *andarraia*, *alquerque*, and checkers were the reason why these checkers games were translated into a game very similar to the Chess game overseas, where checkers were practiced with chips.

This way Marro de Punta took from Chess:

1. The chessboard.
2. The name of the Spanish chess piece - Pawn.  
(The figure of this piece has its origin in the Alquerque game)
3. The figure of the new powerful lady.
4. The name of the new powerful lady.
5. The term *Punta*, which has its origin in the Catalan translation of the Latin Chess Book by Jacobus de Cessolis.



A lie is a sad substitute for the truth,  
but it is the only one that has been discovered so far.  
Elbert Hubbard

## 7. ANDARRAYA

### THE PRECURSOR OF THE CHECKER GAME – THE ANDARRAYA GAME.

One of the most sensational discoveries related to finding a probable predecessor of the Checkers game has been the one from Rob Jansen (Westerveld, 1992:83) about the andarraya (Sesé, 1996). Jansen wondered whether this game could have been the same played in The Philippines (Culin, 1900:649; Murray, 1952:79). Jansen introduced several references and the most important was the one in the European-American Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia (which we mention below) where appears the etymology of the word *andarraya*. But Corominas does not incorporate in its etymological dictionary the *Andarraya* voice and, logically, the description of the mesh pattern in a word which could summarize it has to come from somewhere else. To be sure that *andarraya* could be equal to the Philippine checkers board as we know it, I have tried to give a subsequent analysis of the Moroccan word *attaracha*, which was possible thanks to the etymology of the Spanish words *atarraya* and *esparavel*. Now after the facts exposing below everything indicates that the Philippine checkers game is nothing but the old andarraya game.

### THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD ANDARRAYA.

Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia (1987, Vol 5:412)

**Andarraya** (etim - del ar. marroquí **attarracha**, red., por la semejanza entre la figurade sus mallas y los cuadros del tablero) ant. juego que se hacia con piezas o piedras sobre un tablero semejante al de las damas.

### **Loose translation:**

**Andarraya** (Etym. - from the Arab Moroccan *atarracha*, mesh, by the similarity between the figure of its mesh and the squares in the board) Game made with pieces or stones over a board similar to the board of checkers.

## **THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD ATARRAYA**

**Andarraya** being a word derived from the word *attaracha*, meaning a mesh, we have researched the meaning of the word *attaraya* too, which means mesh. However, the first document where this term could be found dates back to 1570.

Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia (1987, Vol 6:864)

### **ATTARAYA**

Especie de red de pescar, semejante al **esparavel**, que se arroja en el río a fuerza de brazo.(etim.- Del árabe hispánico y magrebí *tarrâha* íd. *atarrâha*). íd. (derivado de t-r-h “arrojar”) 1ª doc. 1570.

### **Loose translation:**

### **ATTARAYA**

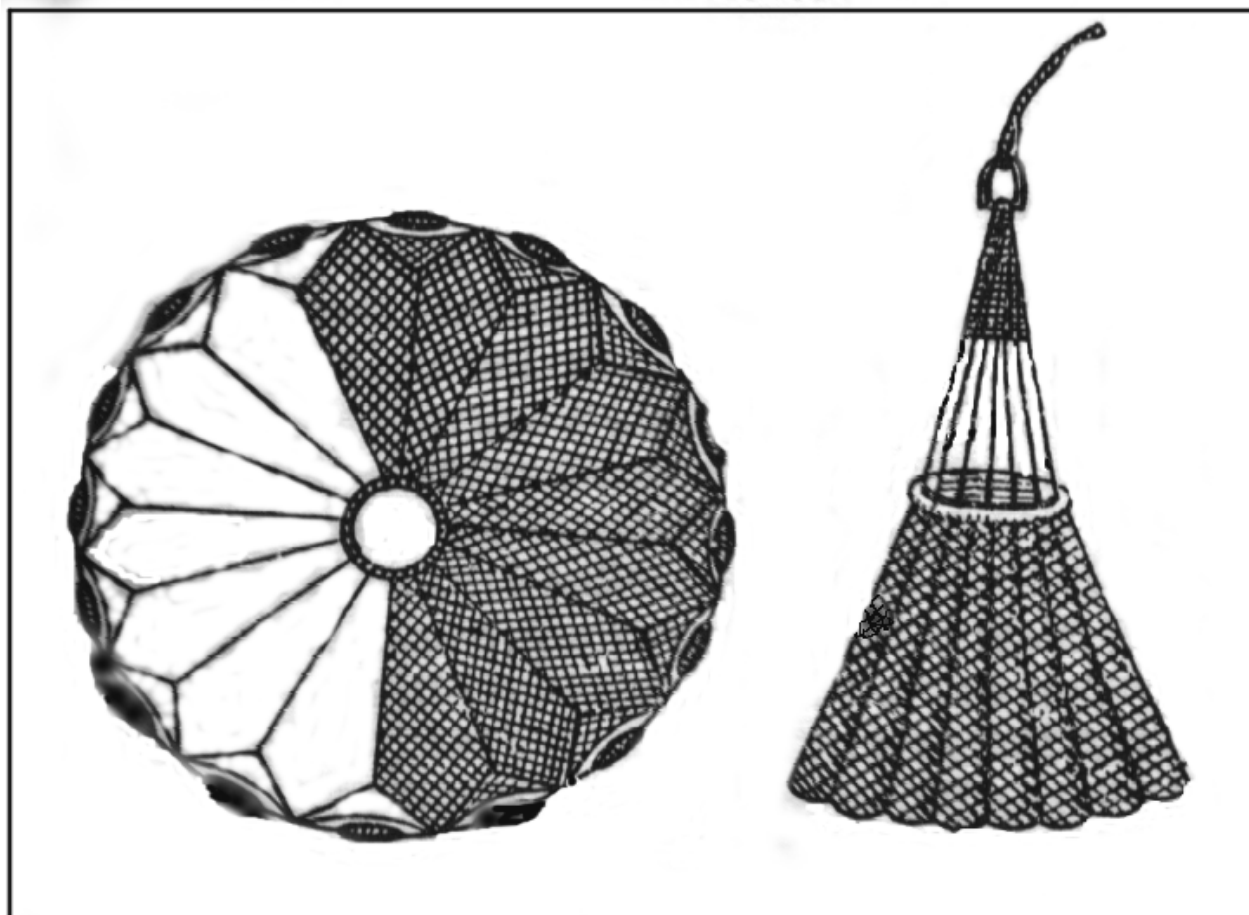
A kind of fishing net, similar to **esparavel (casting net)**, that is thrown in the river by arm. (etim.- from the Arab Hispanic and magrebí *tarrâha* íd. *atarrâha*). Id. (Derived from t-r-h "arrojar - throw") 1st doc. 1570.

In Corominas (1987) we found:

*Etim. - Del ár. atarraha, red arrojadiza.) f. ant. Red para pescar. V. Esparavel.*

**Loose translation:**

*Etim. - AR. atarraha - throwing net, f. ant. Fishing net. V. Esparavel - casting net.*



**Two examples of Atarraya nets**

Thus we see little difference between the words attaracha (=andarraya) and atarraha (=atarraya) and it is therefore likely that we speak here about the fishermen's net - a type of fishing net from mesh fabric. Now we carefully analyze the word Esparavel - casting net.

## THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD ESPARAVEL

**Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada (1987, Volume 22:9):**

**Esparavel.** Pesca. Arte de pesca de tamaño pequeño, de hilo fino y de forma de paracaídas que se emplea mucho en nuestras costas desde los muelles, desde la costa ó desde alguna embarcación, aunque siempre se usa más desde tierra. Este arte se dedica principalmente á la pesca del meruje, llamado también mujol y lisa, y se le denomina en unos sitios **esparavel**, en otros **tarraya** y en otros **rallo** y **rall**.

**Loose translation:**



*Esparavel.* Fishing. Small fishing gear, with a fine wire and parachute shaped that is widely used in our coasts from the piers, from the shore, or from a boat, but it is always more used from the ground. This art is mainly engaged in fishing meruje, also called mullet and lisa, and is called *casting net* in some places, while in others *tarraya* and others *rallo* and *rall*.

**Atarraya network with mesh pattern**

Corominas (1987) noted the following:

Red redonda para pescar, que se arroja a fuerza de brazo en los ríos y parajes de poco fondo.....

### **Loose translation:**

Round fishing net thrown by arm in rivers and shallow spots.....

### **COMMONALITIES OF THE WORDS ANDARRAYA, ESPARAVEL, AND ATARRAYA**

We therefore see that *andarraya* is a word derived from the Moroccan word *attaracha*. We do not know where the Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada found all its information, because we found nothing in Corominas. *Attaracha* is probably nothing but the Moroccan word *atarrâha*. It is also possible that the word *attaracha* was not well written; there are two Ts in it and it could be a typo. We are left to discern why he uses the ‘c’ in *attaracha*, as it is not in the word *atarrâha* (with two Rs). As the two Moroccan words mean ‘net’, it can be accepted that both words mean the same and were written in two ways by the Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada. In all probability this description of *andarraya* comes from Leopoldo Eguilaz and Yanguas' dictionary (1886).

In the Fishing lexicon in Colombia (Montes, 1973) we find this on *andarraya*:

#### **I. Pesca en el mar caribe:**

Es una red redondo cuyo diametro varia entre 2 y 8 metros y cuyas mallas u ojos tienen de 1 a 3 puntos (punto “ancho de dedo”).....

### **Loose translation:**

#### **I. Caribbean Sea Fishing**

It is a round net of which the diameter varies between 2 and 8 meters and of which the mesh or holes have from 1 to 3 points ("finger width" points)...

## II Pesca en agua dulce

En términos generales la atarraya es una red de tamaño variable, tejida en forma de campana y con plomada por toda la circunferencia. Corresponde el esparavel del diccionario académico.

### Loose translation:

## II Freshwater fishing

Overall atarraya is a net of varying size, woven bell-shaped and plumb in the entire circumference. The corresponding esparavel of the academic dictionary.

Atarraya and esparavel are old terms and therefore it is reasonable that these words are used in the former Spanish colony. Dr. Antonio de Morga described in the early sixteenth century the atarraya net and esparavel:

In a translation by *H.E.J. Stanley* (Morga, 1609a) we see:

p. 280 (5 kilometer van Manilla)

(.....) the method of the natives for catching them, is by making inclosures of bejucos, which are canes or reeds, solid and very pliable, and tough, they are slender, and are twisted into cables and other cordage for their vessels. They catch the fish inside these inclosures which are made fast in a ring with stakes, and in creels which they make of those canes; and the most ordinary ways are with watchtowers (**note 1**) and fishing-nets, and other small drag-nets, and with strings and hooks by hand.

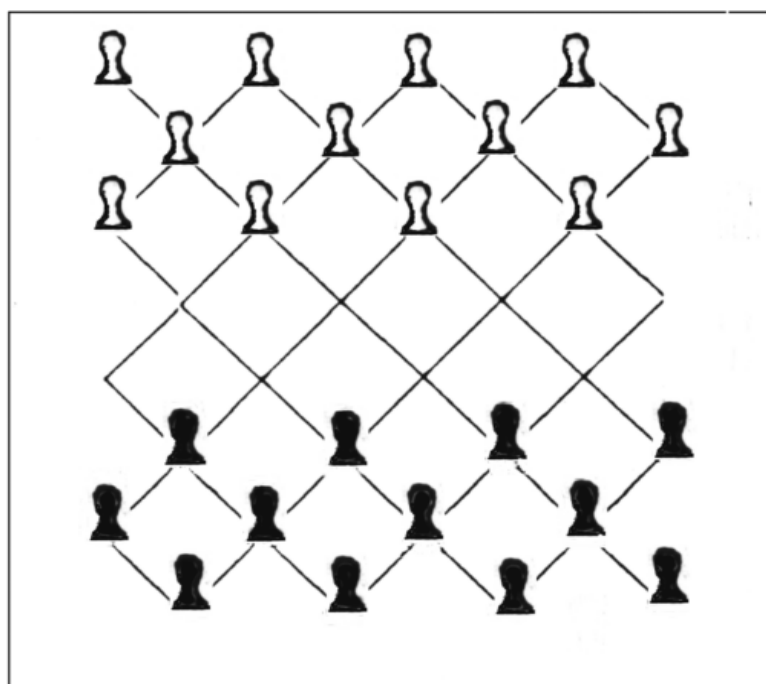
**note 1: atarraya;** probably for atalaya, a raised stand from which watchers can see when the fish come within the nets.

*E.H. Blair* (Morga, 1609b) also describes Dr. Antonio de Morga's work and also quotes *Stanley's* translation:

II p. 96

20 leguas from Manilla, in the province of Bonbon, is another lake of the same name (Bonbon), not so extensive as the former, but with a great abundance of fish. The natives' method of catching them is by making corrals of bejucos, which are certain slender canes or rushes, solid and very pliant and strong; these are employed for making cables for the natives' boats, as well as other kinds of ropes. They catch the fish inside these corrals, having made the enclosures fast by means of stakes. They also catch the fish in wicker baskets made from the bejucos, but most generally with **atarrayas**, **esparaveles**, other small barrederas, and with handlines and hooks.

**Atarraya**, a species of fishing-net. Stanley's conjecture is wrong. **Esparavel** is a round fishing-net, which is jerked along by the fisher through rivers and shallow places. Barredera is a net of which the meshes are closer and tighter than those of common nets, so that the smallest fish may not escape it.



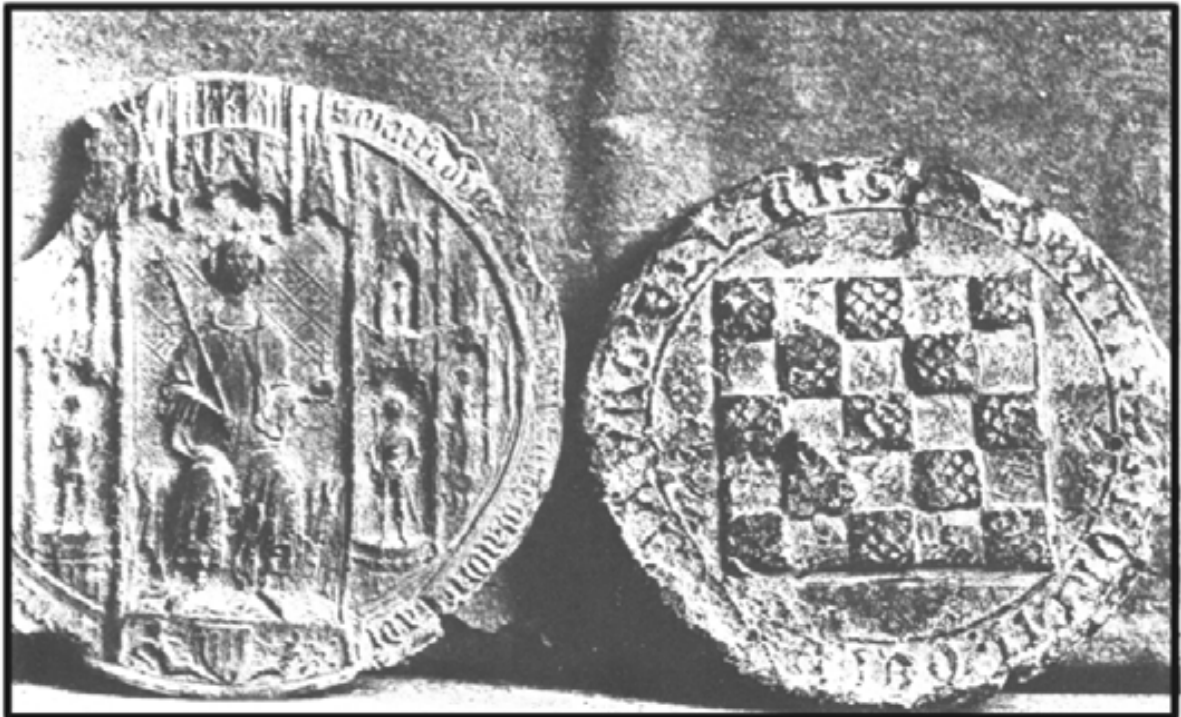
The game of andarraya

## **ANDARRAYA, AN ANCIENT LINE GAME**

In the fifteenth century a game called andarraya which closely resembled our current game of checkers, practiced on a chessboard, was known in Spain. At this time we still needed several data and references to determine how this game was practiced in the past. Therefore we are now stuck with the information and data that we have at our disposal today to reach a hypothesis. Currently we have different references.

### **DESCRIPTIONS OF ANDARRAYA IN LITERATURE**

#### **C. 1400 MARTIN EL HUMANO (1395-1410)**



**Red wax seal of Martin el Humano, c. 1400  
King of Aragon and Sicily**



While in the sixteenth century the use of checkered boxes was common in weapons, tiles, and decorations, in the fifteenth century we find especially a stripe system. An example of this is seen in Martin el Humano's red wax seal (C. 1400). In the Annex engraving of a wax seal we see a kind of board built on a stripe system. Also behind the King Martin el Humano's back, in *Juan II* there appears a stripe system as a game of andarraya.



**Juan II's seal (1458-1479  
King of Aragon and Sicily**

## **1432 JUAN ALONSO DE BAENA**

Juan Alonso de Baena (1406-1454) was a Spanish writer born in Baena. He belonged to a Jewish family, but later converted to the Catholic religion and King Juan II of Castilla appointed him as his secretary. One of his most important works is the *Cancionero de Baena* which was published in 1499. He was friends with Constable Alvaro de Luna back then and other prominent members of the Court. He dedicated his poems to these people as a form of supplication.

#### **415 Pregunta de Juan Alfonso contra Cañisares :**

Pues vos teneys por grant papagayo/en esta çiencia, Señor Cañisares,/dadme rrespuesta syn falta d'asares,/que syempre biudades syn otro desmayo;/ca çierto sepades, señor, que m'enssayo/por darvos jugando vn golpe de xaque;/por ende vos cunple armarvos de jaque,/ca segunt creo convusco es el rrayo. (Baena, 1432/1993:682)

#### **Loose translation:**

Rrayo is related to *ralo* and *rall* (Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada 1987, Volume 22:9), both words can be translated as esparavel (casting net) and tarraya - a mesh patterned net. In light of the foregoing, rrayo may mean a striped mesh patterned game.

#### **1454 JUAN DE MENA**

Juan de Mena's figure was very important in the fifteenth century; he was the one who mentioned andarraya in some verses. It is worth pointing out here that in Juan de Timoneda's book of checkers from 1635 we found a couplet of high art verses that according to Professor Fuster (Valencia) were the kind of verses that were widely used in the fifteenth century (Westerveld, 1991:67). Again and again there appears to be a reference to Juan de Mena, a poet who surpassed his contemporaries regarding such verses.

Juan de Mena's life runs parallel with the reign of Juan II of Castile (1406-1454), because the latter was born in 1411 and died in 1456. Juan de Mena (1411-1456), born in Córdoba, was Juan II's favourite poet.

Juan de Mena resided in Florence where he lived at the court of Pope Eugenio IV during 1442-1443 and was protected by the cardinals Cervantes and Juan de Torquemada, who were present in Italy for reasons of council for the union between the Greek and Roman

Catholic churches. In late August 1453 Mena obtained several thousand maravedis raised on gambling or gaming tax in Cordoba. Did he get the idea or the term *andarraya* for them to put in his verse in 1454?

Throughout his life he was a faithful and intimate friend of Marquis de Santillana. In 1454 Juan de Mena was in the court of the Castilian King and exchanged verses with Santillana Marquis about the four-day fever suffered by the King.



**Professor Joan Fuster**

### **SOBRE LA QUARTANA DEL SEÑOR REY** (Mena, 1989:89)

Porque la que nunca venga  
al señor Rey se le vaya,  
conçertamos un arenga,  
tal que de menos non tenga  
nin de más nada non aya  
Pues tenés el atalaya,  
vos, señor en todo más,  
dad el modo por compás,

que yo non me torne atrás  
a guisa del andarraya.

**Loose Translation:**

**ON THE THIRD DAY FEVER OF THE KING**

because of that which never comes  
disappears with His Majesty.

We prepare a solemn speech,  
so that it becomes not less,  
but also not more.

You, Lord, with respect to the remaining things,  
Take the way as a guide,  
because I do not return,  
such as in the andarraya game.



**Juan de Mena's image in a book from 1509**

*Let's see here the two rules:*

que yo non me torne atrás  
a guisa del andarraya

**Loose translation:**

because I do not return,  
such as in the andarraya game

From the text it is inferred that andarraya began by moving forward and one had to return once arrived at the end of the board. That is also the case in checkers: when one promotes to king (lady), one can move backwards. One probably still returned with a short king (lady) who moved only one square on every play. It is clear that we need to find even more material as evidence to say this with all confidence.

**1464 JUAN DE LUCENA**

Juan de Lucena (1430 - 1506) in his treatise *Vita Beata* dedicated to King Enrique IV introduced three glorious authors: Santillana Marquis, Alonso de Cartagena, and Juan de Mena.

Juan de Lucena was King Juan II of Castile's ambassador. He wrote *Vita Beata*, first printed in Zamora in 1483. In all likelihood *Vita Beata* was written between 1452 and 1455, prepared in the form of a dialogue in which we find Íñigo López de Mendoza (1398-1458), known as Santillana Marquis, Alfonso de Cartagena (Bishop of Burgos), and Juan de Mena (Chronicler of the King) as interlocutors. Lucena's work is interesting for its moral considerations. In the National Library of Madrid there is a *Vita Beata* manuscript signed in 1464 by the writer Juan de Lucena. (Lucena, 1464).

If we want to know more about Juan de Lucena's life, it is worth checking Lapesa (1971) and Calvo's (1995a: 13-16) works.

**It is advised to explain some phrases from pages 167 and 168 regarding andarraya. (Paz, 1892:168).**

"....do figuran la Spaña, fallarás, señor marqués, el Mahometo, cernícalo de Granada, sus faldas alçacas, mostrarnos la cola. Ni you sé dezirlo más honesto, ni ellos pintarlo más feo. Tamaña verguença, vituperio tan grande,¿quién jamás lo sufrió?

**Loose translation:**

".... Where Spain appears, you will find, Mr. Marquis, the Mohammedan, this stupid and rude guy from Granada, with his raised skirt showing us the trail. I cannot decently say it, and they cannot painting it uglier, great shame, so much disapproval. Who never suffered from it? ....."

Quanto augmentaron éllos la fe, tanto nosotros disminuymos. Subiéronla fasta la raya; deçendémosla fasta el culón.

**Loose translation:**

The more they went on to the Catholic faith, the more we got down faith. They rose up to the mark and we descended to the bottom.

In the text we see the phrase:

“subiéronla fasta la raya; deçendémosla fasta el culón”.

**Loose translation:**

They raised it to the strip; let us descend it to the origin (andarraya)

A. Paz y Melía observed in the news of his book:

"quién sabe jugar al andarraya lo entendera luego"

**Loose translation:**

"Who knows how to play andarraya will understand it"

**c. 1475 MS. DOUCE 353**



**Andarraya in 1475?**

This is a partial manuscript reproduction of a black and white miniature MS Douce 353, in possession of the Bodleian Library. Oxford, England. It was written in France in French in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. The content of the manuscript is described as *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César* and the image on page 31R illustrates

the real story of the great Troy, ending with the destruction of Troy which begins on page 30V. (Bakker, 1992:39 and 48). Douce MS 353 was reproduced in several works (Synge (1973: Cover; Asaert, 1974:129; Teleac, 1990:128).

The miniature is cataloged under different titles: *Argo equipped, Carpenters and cooks on quay, Jason and Hercules play chess, Chess being played.*

Ir. G. Bakker (1992:39 and 48) discussed this miniature in detail and considers with doubts that it reflecting andarraya could be a new version of the board game of alquerque of twelve.

## **1495 ELIO ANTONIO DE NEBRIJA**

### **1495, Andarraia, calculorum ludus, NOVUM**

The first reference to andarraya was found by Rob Jansen in Alonso's dictionary (1986) which quotes Nebrija (1495), but Professor Manuel Muñoz Cortes from the University of Murcia told me that Alonso was not very reliable many times. The year 1495 indicated by Alonso could equally be 1516 (Nebrija, 1516). Jansen says in *Hoofdlijn* (1993, No. 30:15-16) that the word andarraya is in Nebrija (1492c/1979), but this is a mistake, because I did not see this word in the original dictionary of 1492 (Nebrija, 1492a). The dictionary quoted by Jansen cannot be dated from 1492, but from 1495. It is therefore necessary to find the original one of Antonio de Nebrija. This I did and it turned out that the first reference to andarraya was in Nebrija's dictionary from 1495 (Nebrija, 1495). Jansen, rightly, has his doubts, because instead of 1495 also 1494 or even 1493 are possible dates (Soberanas, 1992). The dictionary made by Nebrija in 1495 was published again in 1996 (Garcia, 1996).

Therefore 1495 seems to be the most reliable date and then it would be consistent with Alonso (1986). But more interesting are the words we find in Nebrija's dictionary of 1495:

Alquerque

Calculorum ludus



Andarraia  
Dama es casi señora

Calculorum ludus  
Domina-ae

**NOVUM**  
**NOVUM**



**Elio Antonio de Nebrija**

In the 1495 dictionary **NOVUM** (New) is printed in separate forms and the meanings of these words are new. So that the new king (lady), i.e. long king with long movements, was introduced in chess at this time. It all harmonized in date with the two treaties on the new powerful king in chess (Lucena, 1497; Vinyoles, 1480?). As the game was also titled *andarraia* with **novum**, we can admit that the game of andarraya was moved to the chessboard and obtained the (powerful) long dama.

**1891 BASILIO SEBASTIAN CASTELLANO Y LOSADA**

This was a Spanish man of letters and archaeologist born in Madrid on June 14, 1807 and died on June 6, 1891. We owe him many historical works. The 1891 reference comes from Pagés' dictionary (1901)

1891 *Castellanos B.S.* (*Pagés Dicc.* 1902 s/v):

“jugabase entonces mucho al andarraya, que, a la verdad, no era juego muy complicado, etc.”

**Loose translation:**

They then often played the andarraya game,  
which frankly speaking was not a very difficult game, etc.



**Basilio Sebastian Castellano y Losada**

## **1892 A. PAZ Y MELIA**

The Spanish scholar was born in Talavera de la Reina in 1842. He finished his Philosophy and Letters career, and once graduated as an archivist, librarian, and archaeologist, he led until his retirement the address of the departments of manuscripts of the National Library of Madrid. In A. Paz y Melía editing in 1891 on Juan de Lucena's book the first news talks about the word andarraya. On page 168 of this work we find the text: (Paz, 1892)

**“subiéronla fasta la raya; deçendémosla fasta el culón”.**

A. Paz y Melía observed in the news of his book:  
"quién sabe jugar al andarraya lo entendera luego"

**Loose translation:**

"Who knows how to play andarraya will understand it"

## **ANDARRAYA IN DIFFERENT DICTIONARIES**

**1. Alonso (1986) mistakenly indicates a poem from Santillana belonging to Juan de Mena.**

**andarraya:** s. XV juego que se hacia con piezas o piedras sobre un tablero a modo del de damas **a quisa del andarraya**, *Santillana*: decir contra aragoneses (1429) en NBAE t. 19, 515 **andarraia**, calculorum ludus, novum - *Nebrya*: Voc. esp. lat. 1495

**quien sabe jugar al andarraya lo entendera luego**, *Lucena*: Vida beata (1463), 168

We have said earlier that the first mention of andarraya dates from 1454 and belongs to the poet Juan de Mena. Further proof that it is hard to trust dictionaries.

## 2. Diccionario Histórico, (1979):

**Andarraya**, anda-*raya*, andarraia, andaraia, andaraya. (de **andar** + **raya**). andaraja se lee en *Minsheu* 1617, como transcription errónea del andarraia de *Nebrya* 1495. f. **juego semejante al de las damas**.

- 1454 *Mena* Poes. (NBAE XIX, 515b): Pues tenes el atalaya/ vos, señor, en todo mas,/ dad el modo por compas,/ que yo non me torne atras,/a guisa del andarraya.
- 1463-92 *Vida Beata Y Lucena* (1892)168 nota: Quién sabe jugar el anda-*raya* lo entenderá luego.
- 1495 *Nebrya*: andarraia (Nebrija, 1495)
- 1604 *Palet* Dicc.: andaraia (Palet, 1604)
- 1617 *Minsheu* (TL) andaraia o andaraja (Minsheu, 1617)
- 1706 *Stevens* Dict.: andaraya (Stevens, 1706)
- 1891 *Castellanos B.S.* (Pages Dicc.1902 s/v): jugabase entonces mucho al andarraya, que, a la verdad, no era juego muy complicado
- 1495 *Nebrya* et 1770-1984 ac 1786 Dicc. Terreros (Terreros, 1786)

## 3. Tesoro Lexicográfico 1492-1726, Madrid 1947 (S.G. Gaya) (Gaya, 1947)

### **Andarraya**

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>Palet</i> 1604:    | andaraia, ieu de damier (Palet, 1604)  |
| <i>Oudin</i> 1607:    | andaraia, une sorte de ieu d'eschets, et selon aucuns le ieu du damier (Oudin, 1607)   |
| <i>Minsheu</i> 1617:  | andaraia o andaraja. Une sorte de jeu d'eschets ou damier; sorte di gioco di scacchi o di tavole; jocus quidam in lusu latrunculorum; a kinde of play at chests or draughts. (Minsheu, 1617) |
| <i>Francios</i> 1620: | andaraia, giuco de scacchi (Franciosini, 1620)   |

*Stevens* 1720: andaraya, a sorte of game like draughts.  
(*Stevens*, 1706)  
*Nebrya* 1492: andaraya, espèce de jeu de dames. calculorum  
ludus (*Nebrija*, 1492)

Gaya also mentions *Nebrija* in 1492, but it is a mistake. The first reference to the word *andarraya* is in *Nebrija's* dictionary from 1495 (*Nebrija*, 1495). Needless to strive in the argument here since many dictionaries copied everything randomly and thus also the errors that others had posted earlier. Therefore dictionaries are only an aid to research the first form of checkers, but do not give an absolute guarantee.

1616 *Minsheu* (*Minsheu*, 1617)  
G. une sorte de jeu d'eschets ou damier.  
I. sorte di gioco di scacchio o di tavole.  
L. Iocus quidam in lusu latrunculorum.  
A. a kind of play at chests or draughts.

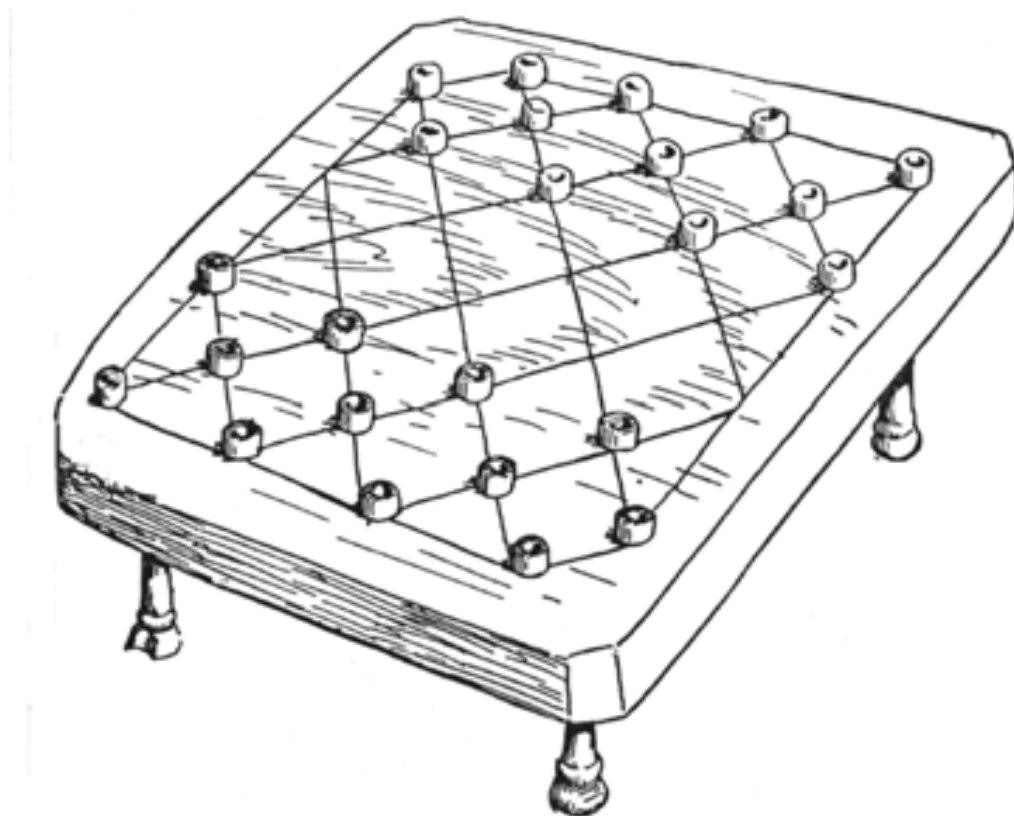
1646 *Trognesius* (*Trognesius*, 1646)  
*Andaraia* = une sorte de ieu d'eschets, seker schaeckspel.



MS DOUCE 353 (c. 1475)

## ANDARRAYA-TYPE CHECKERS GAMES OF SPANISH ORIGIN

The Filipino checkers game is exactly the same as the current game of checkers where the diagonal is found to the right, as is the case in the current Spanish game.



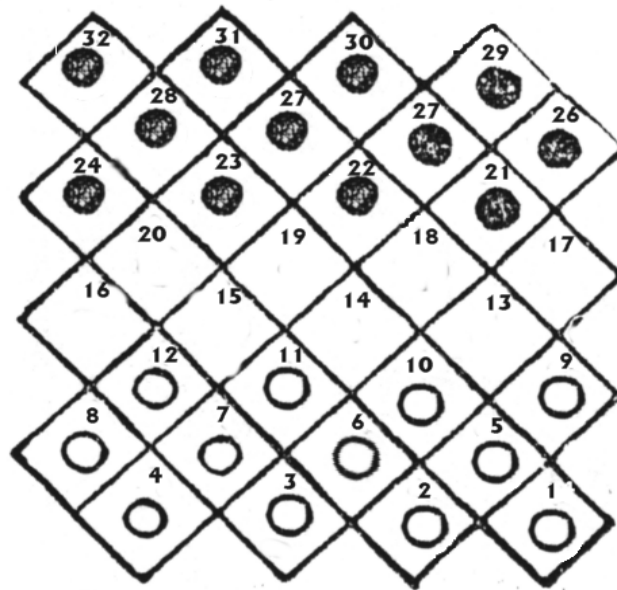
**The Philippine checkerboard**

Murray (1952: 79) mentions:

The Spanish game is also played in the Philippines (*Culin*, f, 648) under the name *dama*, but on the lined board of fig. 33. This simplification was first suggested by J.G. Lallement in 1802. Spanish draughts is also played in Hawaii where it is called *moo* and played on the chessboard (*Culin*, c, 244).

Here we can observe the following:

1. Murray in his Filipino checkers drawing has the diagonal to the left, while the diagonal in the Spanish game is on the right.
2. Murray also says that this game simplification was first suggested by the Frenchman J.G. Lallement (1802).



**Lallement's board**

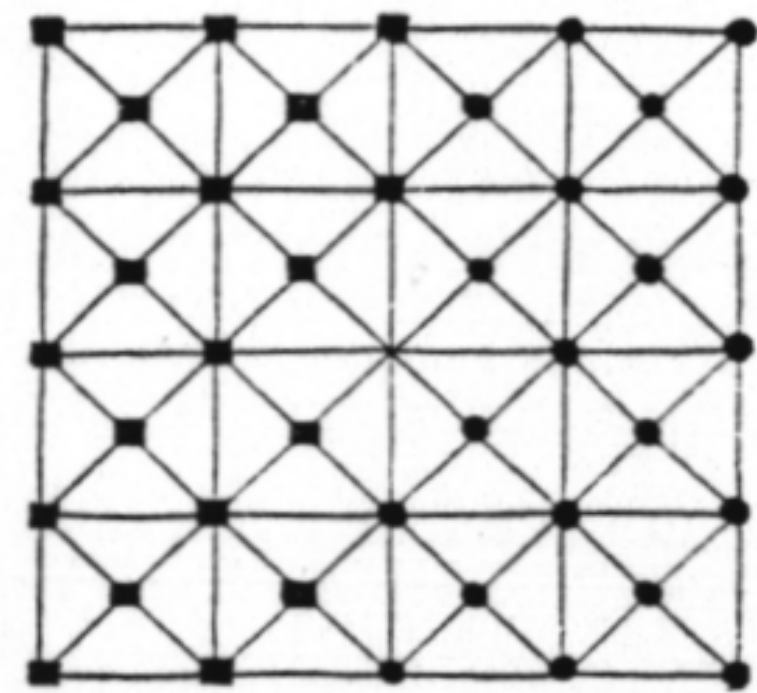
We must remember here that the first checkerboard of Friesland (Holland) with stripes and squares dates from 1724 and Jan van Leiden's checkerboard from about 1530. Both checkerboards have been mentioned in the chapter on Marro de Punta.

Culin (1907:795) mentions in the board game Tûkvnanawöpi (Arizona):

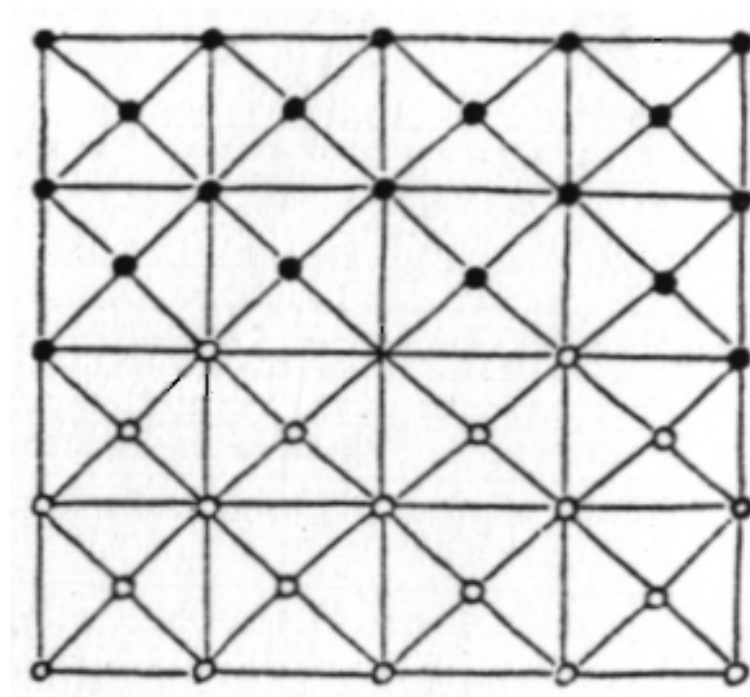


*The inclosed spaces outside the squares are called houses. In these the killed animals are placed.*

By 'houses' he means the squares in the checkerboard or chessboard in Spain, where the usual term is **casilla**. This board game is much like the board game that Culin (1907:792) describes in Fig. 1088 (New Mexico).



**Tûkvnanawöpi**

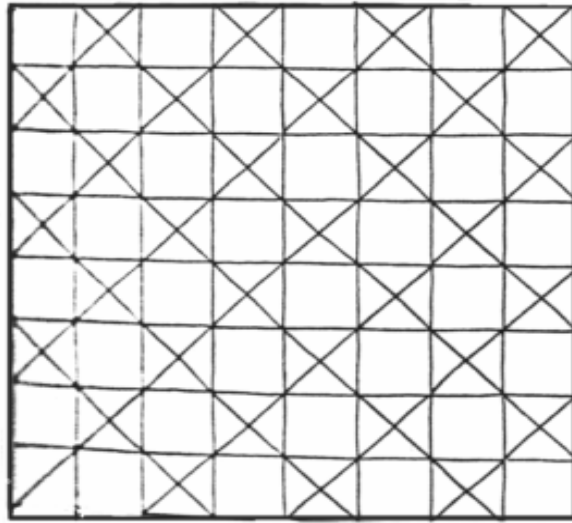


**Culin's board "1088"**

Parker (1909) describes in his book the name of checkers on 144 squares in Ceylon with: *dam*, *draughts* or literally *the net* (la red).

p. 584/585 Dam, Draughts; or literally *the Net*.

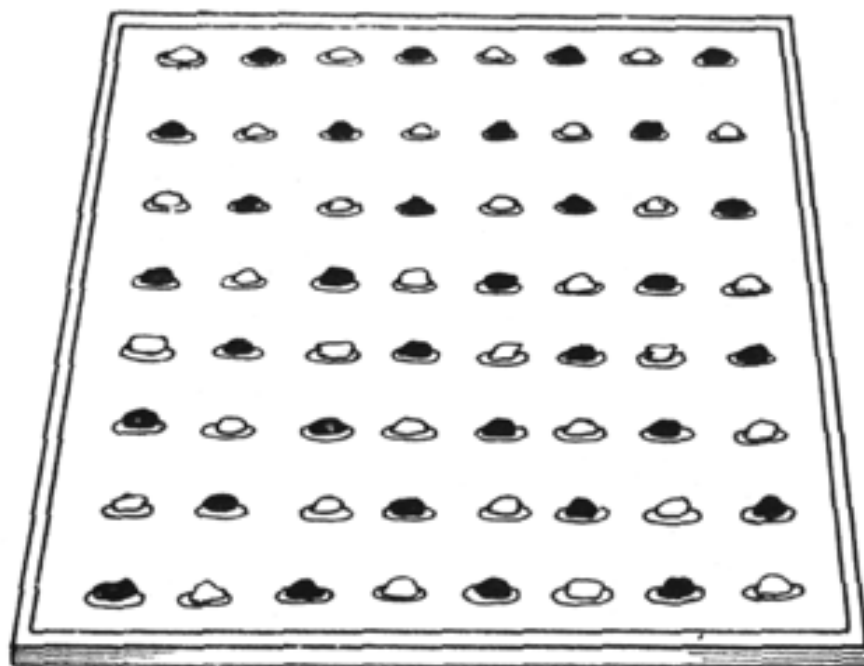
This game, which is also known in India, is closely allied to Polish Draughts. The pieces move in the squares instead of going along the lines. (....)



**The Moo Checkers game, Hawaii**

Culin (1899:244) mentions that in the checkers played in Hawaii by the name of Moo the squares are called *ha-le* (home). And so the checkers game *Moo* also discovers a Spanish origin, because in the Spanish game the squares on the chessboard or checkerboard are called *houses* (casas, casillas).

*Fulton* (1983:44) describes a type of checkers game in Hawaii:  
“In old Hawai’i *könane* boards were made on large flat stones or made from pieces of wood. The boards were of many different sizes. **King Kamehameha** Y was very good at playing *könane*”.



**Hawaiian Checkers**

## **CHECKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES**

The Philippines were discovered in 1521 by the Spaniard Fernando de Magallanes during a trip to the spice islands of the Moluccas. However it was not until 1543 when the Spaniards were able to settle in smoothly.

### **1977 NID ANIMA**

A description of the Filipino checkers game is found in the book *Filipino Games* (Anima, 1977):

#### **p. 60-63 Dama**

Filipinos may claim **dama** or **checkers** in Shakespeare's language - to be an indigenous game with them, but so do most other countries. In fact, almost all countries stake a claim to it.

We are told that its origin dates back to the year 4.000 B.C. King Rameses was reputed to be addicted to this game , or so attest the large inscriptions discovered in the ancient temples of Thebes. It is also a popular amusement among the Moors.

Dama is played 2 ways, the so-called **derecha** and the **Italiana**. In the former, the movements as well as the capturing of pawns are always straight ahead and never backwards. While in the latter, the movement is also straight ahead, but there is a noticeable difference in the capturing of pawns, as it is allowed to leap backwards. Whenever the Filipinos play the **dama**, they always specify beforehand under which type they are playing, whether **derecha** or **Italiana**, so as to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. Checkers is traditionally played in the manner of the indigenous **derecha**. All indications point to the second type's name as signifying an Italian vintage. The *ilocanos* never fail to specify that the game be played in the socalled **peon tugaw**, meaning that every move should be final and cannot be retracted. In other words, **touch move** or so they identify it in English. Thus it behooves upon every player to study his moves well to avoid the temptation of backtracking.

Two persons usually play the **dama**. To other peoples like the Americans and Englishmen, it is played on a chess-board. The Filipinos, however, play it on crisscross lines. There is practically no difference in how either play it. The movements are always a single step, except when it captures and leaps over one step. The objective of the game, whether it is **dama** or checkers, is to capture the most, if not all pawns. The one who kills all the enemies wins. The pawn that reaches the enemy fortresses - there are five of it in the **dama** - gets promoted: it becomes a dame: or **king** to the checkers habitues. As such, it becomes powerful because it is empowered to move by leaps from end to end of the line, if so desired. Incidentally, the **dama** is distinguished from the other pawns by crowning, meaning another pawn is placed atop it. In chess, a pawn that achieves the

feat of the **dama** gets promoted likewise by becoming a rook. The pawns that Filipinos are habituated to using includes beverage corks, stones, shells and sometimes buttons. When the beverage cork is used, one player uses it in a rightside up manner, while the other in an upside-down manner, so as to make them distinguishable and prevent possible confusion. Checker habitues, on the other hand, use round wooden pegs.

**Dama** has much to concede to chess. The latter is more imaginative than the former. Its pawns are more symbolic. Knight, bishop, rook, queen, king- they are really more representative of real life characters. But beyond these, the difference becomes insignificant. The **dama** has 12 pawns, but so does chess. The dama pawns move diagonally and in single steps, except when capturing an enemy. While chess pawns move in various directions the knight in L-shape movements, the bishop diagonally and by great leaps, if so desired; the pawns and rook straight ahead but with the former by single steps, while the latter by great distances when necessary; the king and queen flexibly and versatilely, with the distinction that the former is limited to just a single step each time, while the latter by leaps and bounds, according to expediency.

The **dama** may not be as encompassing as chess in terms of its intellectual possibilities which has been pronounced to be infinite, but this nevertheless doesn't make it any less challenging to the intellect. For it possesses qualities that are no less interesting.

The rules seen here have much to do with the game of Spanish checkers. The large diagonal is found in the Spanish game on the right. When a piece is touched, it must move mandatorily. Capturing is mandatory and one cannot eat backwards with the pawns. There is a long (powerful) king - dama - that can move in all directions. A pawn can only capture forward. If the pawn is promoted to lady capturing enemy pieces and can keep capturing enemy pawns backwards, you

will have to crown first. Then it is the opponent's turn to move. The opponent can move or protect his threatened pawn. In the Spanish game the piece is always called pawn and the crowned piece is always called dama - lady / queen.

## 1980 PROF. MELLIE LEANDICHO LOPEZ

There is an in-depth study on the Filipino checkers. (Leandicho, 1980) Nr. 78 Queen - dama - (Chess), Tagalog, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, Island huzôn. (Dama literally means queen).

### **Props:**

a small wooden board, about 10 or 11 inches square, with a diagram. If a board is not available, the diagram may be drawn on the ground, table top, or doorstep. 24 Pieces (pitsás) or **men** (12 for each player) using any of the following: small sections of bamboos, stones, beans, colored tiles, broken china, beads, bottle caps (the important point is to use whatever is available so long as the pitsás of one player can be distinguished from those of his opponent. The popular ones used in Nueva Ecija are stones against bottle caps).

### **Pre-game:**

Formation – the 2 players sit across each other with the diagram between them. Each player places his **men** at the intersection of the lines of the diagram. Object: the ultimate object of the game is to capture all of opponent's **men** especially the **queen**. Basic rule: every move (tulak or kilos) is always forward (pasulong or abante) to an intersection, never backward (atrasan), except for the **queen** (dama).

### **Movements:**

1. the first player moves his stone to an intersection. The other player moves his bottle cap. note: the various moves of each

player depend on his own technique and strategy. Each strives to move his pieces toward the line directly in front of his opponent, in order to have a powerful **dama** and at the same time **eat** (kain) as many of his opponent's pieces along the way).

2. Any player **eats** or captures an opponent's pitsa that stand in the next intersection by jumping to the empty intersection behind it. (the succesfull player removes the captured piece)

3. The player who succeeds in making one of his pitsas reach the first line on the opponent's side gets a **queen** (dama). (note: the **queen** is the most powerful piece on the board. Skillful use of the **queen** is a great asset in winning the game)

(a) the **queen** can move any distance in any straight line

(b) she can move forward, backward, sidewise, or diagonally as far **men** may stop her as her path is clear; only one of her own in her progress in a line.

(c) she may **eat** or capture any opponent exposed to her direct approach.

4. The player who succeeds in **eating** or capturing most or all of his opponent's pieces wins. Some players do not wait for an opponent to capture all their **men**. When they realize that their chances of winning is hopeless, they declare, **Tale na ako** (meaning, **I lose**) and the game ends. There are instances during the game when an opponent would intentionally sacrifice one of his **men** and force the other player to **eat** it. This is a strategic move meant to improve the position of the player involved or a move to trap a **queen** or a piece that is about to be a **queen**. There is a cardinal rule in Philippine **dama** that every time a player puts one of his pitsás in the path of an opponent, that opponent must eat, whether he likes it or not. The moment a player's piece becomes a **queen**, it is the responsibility of that player to make that pitsá easily recognized by the opponent, obviously because of the **queen's** many powers. If the new **queen** is a bottle cap, he gets another cap and puts it on top of the new **queen**. If he has a stone for a new **queen**, he gets one of the opponent and places his **stone queen** inside the cap. In other words, the new **queen** must be different from the other pieces.



There is no **king** in this Philippine version of chess. The pieces are identical and only one, the **queen** has a rank and special powers but she has to achieve and work for that rank.

After this follows a whole page with comments on the Chinese Chess, chess in the United States, checkers in Hawaii, and considerations on the active role of king or queen in civilizations. The writer, a teacher who moved to the United States, considered checkers a form of chess. Anyway, she is very aware of everything that was published in regards of games and mind games.

The word 'atrasan', as the text says, is Spanish and means to move backward. The word 'eat' means to eat in Spanish and is nothing other than the word used in the game of Spanish checkers to refer to capturing pieces. It is also stated here in the text that its origin is Spanish. Noteworthy is the variety of uses of 'Queen'. Dama here literally means 'Queen'. In Spain the crowned pawn has always the same meaning, the same as in chess, i.e. dama or reina.

## 1925 ELSDON BEST

### Best claims the following regarding checkers on Hawaii:

(Best, 1925)

IV: Games and pastimes requiring calculation, mental alertness or memorising powers.

Page 60

(....) Ngati-Porou tribe: *Tuta Nihoniho*, of the same tribe, stated that the European game of draughts was introduced into that district in the time of his grandfather, probably by sailors, or early traders, or missionaries. In the far off Hawaiian Isles, a game resembling draughts was played, and known by 2 names, **mu** and **konane**. This word **mu** is also the Maori name for our game of draughts (**mu and kaimu**), and as **mu** is the Maori pronunciation of our world move, it has been held by some that it was derived from that word, so often ejaculated by our draughts players.....

Page 82

(....) East Coast natives state that **Mu Panihi** (Spanish draughts) used to be played among them; moving backward was allowed in this game. This form of the game was probably introduced by some strolling Paniora (Spaniard) in the early days of European settlement. I knew a member of that people who was living on the coast some 50 years ago.

#### A belated note:

I have been informed that in the Spanish game of draughts a great number of pieces are employed, and it is known that Spanish vessels visited the Hawaiian Isles as early as the 16th century.....

It seems not improbably that the Spanish form of the game of draughts was introduced into the Hawaiian Isles in the 16th or 17th century by Spanish voyagers, some of whom certainly

visited the group. The Hawaiian tradition of shipwrecked white folk living among them many generations ago probably refers to Spanish folk.

It has not been given much attention in the history of checkers to the checkers historian William Shelley Branch (1854-1933), who was like José Brunet and Bellet, of the opinion that the game of alquerque of 12 was a precursor of the current game of checkers. Branch was truly a pioneer in his historical work on checkers, which he published in 1911 and 1912 in *The Pittsburgh Leader* (USA). He was well underway with his hypothesis about the origin of checkers, suggesting that the game was played on a board with stripes around 1300. This date seems too early to me. It is very likely that we have to place the date a century later. It is enough to indicate here the following brief items from this historian (Branch, 1911):

12.11.1911

As I am now parting with the old **Alquerque** board I may mention that a chess board is not required for draughts at all. Its use is customary and convenient, but the game can be played without it and has been. It could be played on a board of 32 spots or circles, but I think the best would be (apart from a chess board) **the Lallement Draughts board....**

14.1.1912

A board on the same principle as the **Lallement** has been used for centuries in the Philippine Islands.

26.11.1911

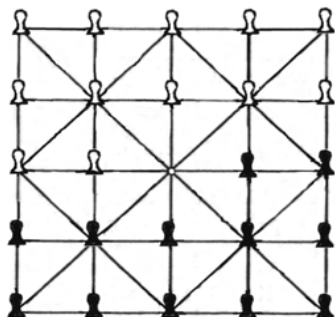
As to the chessboard, we use it, but our game does not require it, and could have had its own special board from the first, if the players had thought of it and devised it. As I have pointed out, and as many knew before, checkers can be played and is played on a board of intersecting lines; and also on a board of 32 squares or diamonds rather, invented by a noted French

draughtsplayer, M. Lallement. Our game is quite independent of the chessboard, if we choose to make it so. What is come to it is that the game of checkers is, including its more elementary form, much older than the board we play it on, so far as draughts is concerned. The board, in an unchecked state, is older than chess, as it was used for a dice game in India before chess was invented. Both chess players and checker players have taken a board that belongs to somebody else!

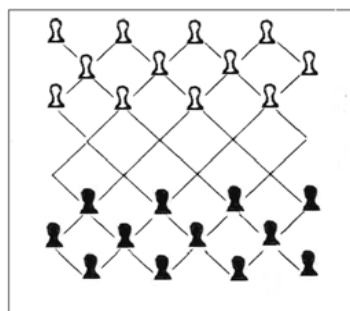
If we can believe Branch, we deduce from this that the pattern of the andarraya game was already some centuries old. Our game of andarraya can be taken from the chessboard in the fifteenth century, but it may equally be possible that the construction of the andarraya board already existed longer before in Spain.

In all likelihood we can admit that andarraya, as was discovered by Rob Jansen, was a game that was practiced before the Spanish checkers, using the chessboard. It was an intermediate option between two games:

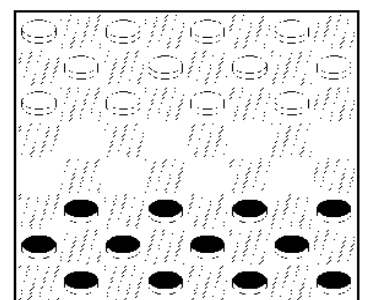
the ancient game of alquerque of 12 and the game on a chessboard, as indicated in the schemes below.



**Alquerque-12**

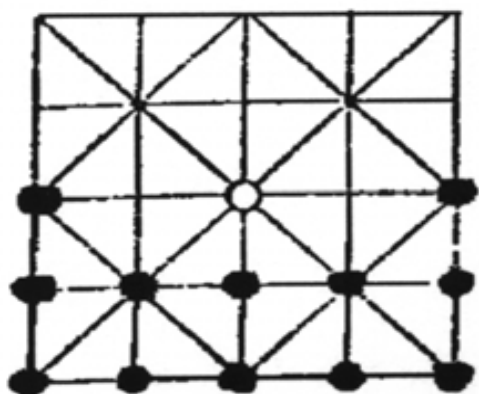


**Andarraya**

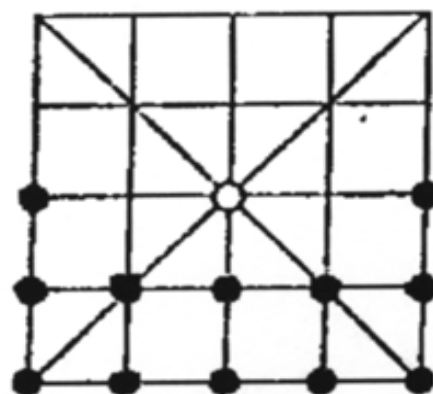


**Spanish Checkers**  
**Black starts the game**

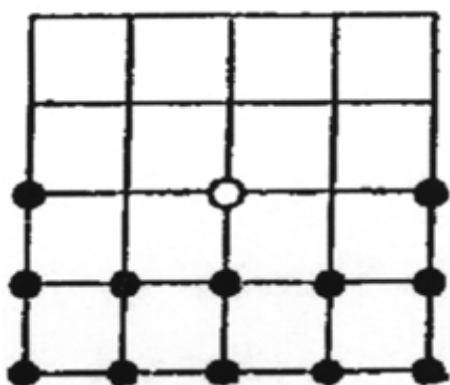
A similar situation is probably found in other games as well. As Alfonso X the Wise (1283) described, the game of *catch the hare* in 1283. This pastime, according to Culin (1907:79), was called ***coyote y pollos*** by Pagago Indians (Arizona) and Culin himself says that it is of the European origin. Over time the game was simplified and so the pastime of *coyote* was developed, which was practiced in Mexico (Culin, 1898: 876). The simplification was carried out in the game and so was finally born the Hare game. This entertainment, according to Culin (1907: 798), was practiced at the end of the twentieth century in Spain and this pastime was played under the name of *las liebres y el indio* in New Mexico (Culin, 1907: 79). This way we obtain the following schemes:



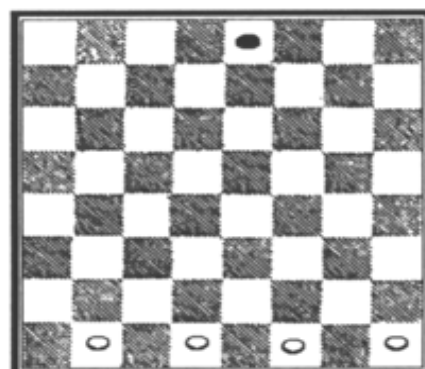
1.Catch the hare  
2.Coyote y pollos



Coyote

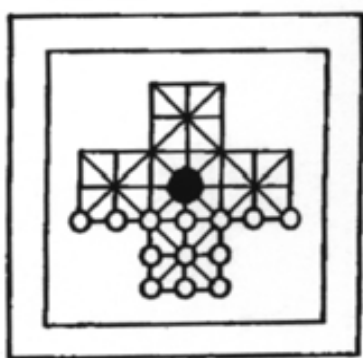


Juego de la liebre  
The Hare game

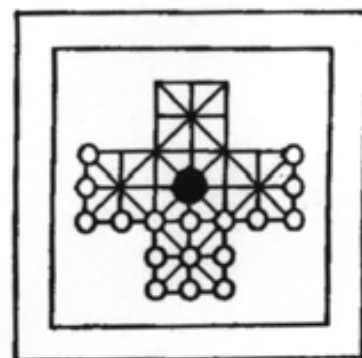


Caza el lobo

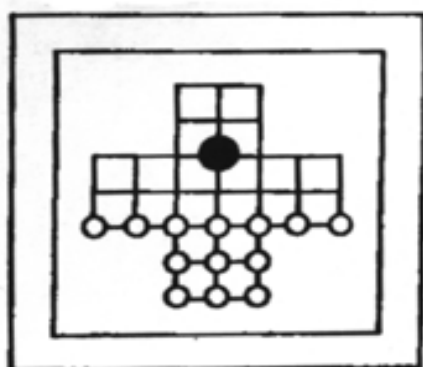
Probably the English game of *fox and geese* is even older than the catch the hare game. This pastime is called *Renard et les poules* (Maison des jeux Academiques, 1668) and *Marelle Quintuple* (Moulidars, 1840) in France. Here we can see the development of the three variants in the game:



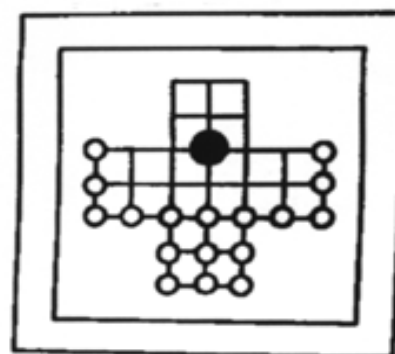
**Fox and geese 1  
Poules**



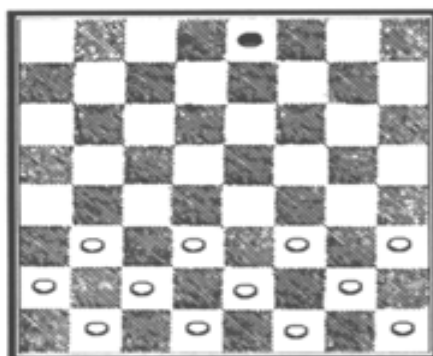
**Fox and geese 2**



**Fox and geese 3.**



**Fox and geese 4.**



**Renard et les Poules**

## THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE TERM ANDARRAYA

It may be a strange phenomenon, but the term *andarraya* quickly disappeared from everyday life in Spain in the sixteenth century. The fact that it is still used in different dictionaries is mainly due to the authors of the various dictionaries blindly copying Nebrija's words. But if the term *andarraya* disappeared, would the game do so too? No, the game was saved under the generic name *alquerque* in the sixteenth century and beyond. The test is provided by Covarrubias (1611) and the various dictionaries describing *alquerque* as a game of checkers. The Moor game of alquerque of 12 gradually disappears from Spain now that the Moors should embrace the Catholic religion and Christian customs since 1501.

Jansen (1993, No. 29:3) clearly perceived this possibility when he wrote: ***I felt the gradually growing feeling that the game of checkers was practiced at first on a striped board.*** Also Pratesi (1991: 85) was accurate when he wrote about draughts (Net) some years ago: ***In conclusion it seems quite possible that terms of a family different from dama or dame could indicate draughts during the first time of its existence.*** Pratesi's thesis was based on Torrelli's work (1596) dealing with table games at the end of his book without specifying them.

For years I knew that the word *alquerque* in Covarrubias' text was some kind of game of checkers, but could not reach a decisive conclusion because I never believed that the alquerque of 12 of Alfonso X the Wise in 1283 could have been a game of checkers. After studying Covarrubias' text a lot I finally came to the conclusion that the game of alquerque was nothing more than the game of andarraya or eventually the stripe system of andarraya placed on a chessboard (Covarrubias, 1611).

Now we study Covarrubias' following words (1611):

**- escaque:**

llamamos escaques las casas quadradas del tablero del acedrez o los ángulos de los quadros de la tabla del alquerque, que se juega con pedrecitas blancas y negras, y suelen comer con una, dos y tres, y este parece ser el juego antiguo, que llamavan de los ladroncillos, del qual hazen mención los poetas. **Ouidio, De Arte Amandi; Cautaque non stulte latronum praelia ludat, - Unus cum gemino calculus hoste perit.** Quando con una piedra que da al contrario le gana dos, saltando de una en otra casa, **Marcial: Hic mihi bissono numeratur tessaera puncto, - Calculus hic gemino discolor hoste perit.**

**Loose translation:**

We call squares the square boxes of the chessboard or the corners of the squares of the alquerque board, that one plays with white and black small stones and where the players usually capture one, two or three pieces, and this seems to be the old game, that was called the old robber game of which the poets make mention. **Ouidio, De Arte Amandi; Cautaque non stulte latronum praelia ludat, - Unus cum gemino calculus hoste perit.** When a player gives his piece to the enemy and he wins two, jumping from one house to another one. **Marcial: Hic mihi bissono numeratur tessaera puncto, - Calculus hic gemino discolor hoste perit.**

We see that the angles of the tables that Covarrubias quotes here refer to the andarraya board. Covarrubias leaves to be captured, more than 3 pieces in such alquerque, as is the case in checkers. With the game of alquerque of 12, where you can also capture back, you can do so for more than 3 pieces, so I do not think this last game appears in Covarrubias' texts.



### - alquerque

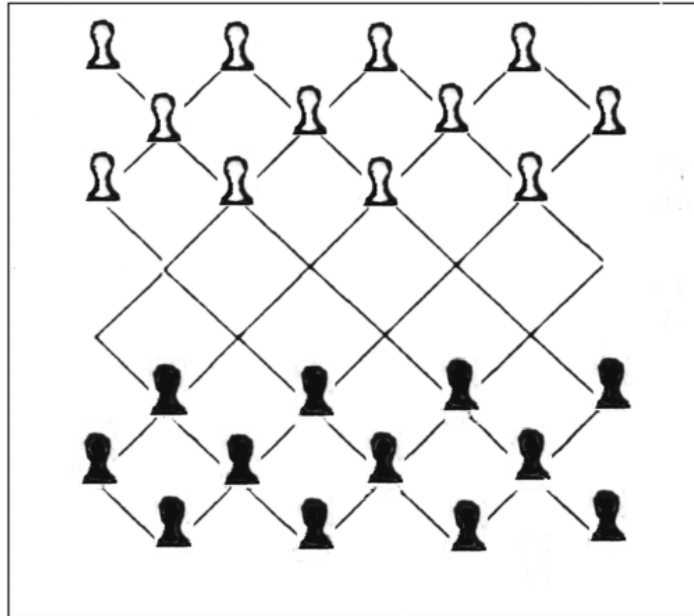
Alquerque es un juego de piedrecillas, sobre un tablero rayado que haze diversos quadros, y por las rayas van moviéndose, y quando hallan tercera casa vacía del contrario, passan a ella, ganándole la piedra que estava en medio; que algunas vezes acaece ser dos y tres, y si pudiendo tomar, no lo haze, pierde la suya, y por termino propio se la soplan. En griego se llama este juego **schyraphia**, (.....).

El padre Guadix (1593) dize que el nombre **alquerque** es arábigo, y lo mesmo que en castellano llamamos castro, porque tiene semejança el tablero rayado donde se juega, a la castramentación lineada en planta. Diego de Urrea dize ser juego de pedreçuelas sobre rayas, y que en su término arábigo es **herequetum**, que vale movimiento, del verbo **hereque**, que significa mover, porque las pedreçuelas se van moviendo de uno a otro ángulo. Deste mesmo verbo trae origen la palabra harre aquí, por **arreque**, que vale tanto como **muévete**..

### Loose translation:

Alquerque is a game with stones on a line board with several squares, and the stones move along the lines. When there is an open third square of the enemy the stone can jump to this place, winning a piece that stood in the middle; in some cases it may be two or three stones. And when one has to capture with a stone and fails to do this, then this stone is lost, and one blows the stone. In Greek they call this game **schyraphia**, (.....).

Father Guadix says that the name alquerque is Arabic and the same that we in Castilian call Castro, because the line boards on which one plays resemble the regular ground patterns of army camps. Diego de Urrea calls it a pebbles play on lines and says that the Arabic term is herequetum which means movement; from the verb hereque - to move, because the pebbles move from one end to a different angle. The same verb is the origin of the word harre here for arreque, which means moving yourself.



**Andarraya in the fifteenth century is the game  
of alquerque in the sixteenth century**

- Soplar

En ciertos juegos del alquerque llaman soplar el tomar la pieza del contrario, que pudo ganar con ella y no lo hizo.

### **Loose translation:**

In some alquerque games they use the term blow for the elimination of an enemy piece that forgot to capture.

The strange thing here in Spanish checkers of the sixteenth century called Marro de punta is that it was practiced on a chessboard and capturing was mandatory. Maybe<sup>37</sup> this same game was called *au dames* in France (Rabelais, 1535), in which it is allowed to blow,

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<sup>37</sup> There is a lot of doubt about this. The terms *au forcé* and *forçat* were also used in French board and card games. Take a look at the chapter on Dama where François' work is described Rabelais.

because there was another French game called *au forcé* (Rabelais, 1535) in 1535. Possibly the latter term was used for mandatory capturing. Some years later in 1542 the term was changed to *forçat* (Rabelais, 1542).



**King Alfonso X The Wise (San Telmo Palace in Seville)**

## CONCLUSION

Antonio de Nebrija talks in his dictionary about two games of stripes; alquerque and andarraya. This implies that these two games should be practiced differently. The game that resembles the current Spanish checkers the most is andarraya, which had a Castilian name. In 1495 there were two crowns in Spain - those of Aragon and Castile, and each kingdom had its own language. The Crown of Aragon integrated different kingdoms, among which were Catalonia, Valencia, Mallorca, Sicily, and Naples. Marro de Punta was probably the name for andarraya in Valencia - a name that could also be used in other Aragonese regions, such as Aragon, Catalonia, and Mallorca.

With Rob Jansen's discovery of the term *andarraya* he finally had the Castilian name for Marro de Punta, which I had been looking for over many years.

The term *andarraya* disappeared in the sixteenth century and continued with the generic name *alquerque* (the andarraya striped system on a chessboard?), which then would largely replace the old game of alquerque of 12.

When we study Juan de Mena's texts, we realize that he speaks of a fever that does not return. In this metaphor a slow effect on the game is expected. Juan de Lucena's texts in 1464 also go in this direction. In the game of alquerque of 12 you can move pawns forward, left, right, and back. This reflects a rapid effect in contrast to andarraya where pieces must occupy the eighth row first before you can move backward. Possibly after the occupation of the eighth row the pawn would return as a short king and could attack the enemy position on the back, because the enemy pawns could not capture the king backward.

This also sheds light on the probable games of French and English checkers, where a short king was used, as today still happens in England and Italy.

It is noteworthy that most historians do not take Branch into account, albeit he was the one who came after José Brunet and Bellet with the hypothesis that checkers is alquerque placed on a chessboard.

The first description of andarraya dates from 1454. There is even a possibility that the reference rrayo (Baena, 1432/1993:682) refers to andarraya. If Alfonso X the Wise does not describe andarraya, it is because the old game of checkers (andarraya) did not exist in Spain yet. This view is strengthened by the fact that Alfonso X the Wise described all types of board games in detail. For board games he gave an overview of at least 15 games (Alfonso X the Wise, 1283). If the game jeu de fers or the old game of checkers really had existed in the eleventh century as stated by Murray, Kruijswijk, and others, then it is a mystery why Alfonso X the Wise did not describe it in his game manuscript, now Worldwide famous.

If you want to succeed at something,  
you have to think differently from the rest

Govert Westerveld

## **8. ALQUERQUE**

### **THEORIES ON THE ALQUERQUE**

There are many theories regarding the game of **alquerque**. All checkers historians always evoke the old game of **alquerque 12**, as described by King Alfonso X the Wise in his book (Alfonso X the Wise, 1283).

#### **1890 Joseph Brunet and Bellet (1818-1905)**

In his book the author made a drawing of an alquerque game with 12 pieces. The historian said the following (Brunet and Bellet, 1890: 204-206):

(....) and it is possible and almost probable that the checkers played with 12 white and 12 black pieces in Spain (in France and other countries it's played with more pieces) is nothing but the old *mallet* applied to the 8x8 chessboard when the game was popularized in the West.

Therefore the Spaniard Brunet and Bellet was the first one to think that the alquerque of 12 may have been a precursor to checkers.

#### **1912 William Shelley Branch (1854-1933)**

Branch believed that the game passed to a chessboard around 1300 and thus began the crowning. This author wrote about the old checkers in the Philippines that's played on a board of lines. This way he could build the following hypothesis on the origin of checkers (Branch, 1911):

Checkers can be played on a board of lines like **alquerque**. It is a form of **alquerque**, changed from the more ancient variety by reason of having been played on the chessboard with a different arrangement of the men in order to make them run on lines of the same colored squares. This provided the difference between single and double corner. To put it another way, the old **alquerque** as described in the MS Alfonso was our game of drafts in an early stage.

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In the history of checkers almost no attention is paid to Branch who had a chess column in the *Cheltenham Examiner* from November 1890 to December 25, 1913 (the closure of the newspaper), a time at which the section was still in the *Cheltenham and Gloucestershire Graphic Chronicle* from 28 February 1914 until his death (January 22, 1933). Apparently he also wrote in the *Cheltenham Free Press* under the pseudonym of "Douglas". In these columns he often wrote about the history of checkers (Whyld, 1997). Branch wrote in *The Draughts World* (December, 1903, issue 3: 222), a monthly newsletter that was published in Glasgow, which was in contact with H.J.R Murray and referring to it he said: (...) *I can read ancient manuscripts in Arabic, Latin, Norman-French, German, etc. and have some copies of all those dealing with chess -some of the tenth century, etc. Incidentally I've got to know more than anyone else in boardgames about general from before the modern period.*

*He gives about 1300 AD as the date for the origin of the game of drafts as known in England in 1380, and the country of origin - Spain. I agree with him.* It is interesting to reflect here the fact that Murray (initially) thought of Spain. There is no doubt that Murray had to use much of Branch's initial research, but he did not even mention it anywhere and this caused Branch's name to unfairly and unfortunately fall into oblivion.

### 1952 Murray:

The conclusion that **ferses** was draughts seems inevitable, and the life of the name **ferses**, c 1150-1400, confirms this conclusion. What then

were its parents? Undoubtedly one parent was chess which provided the board and the name of the draughtsmen, **fers** as long as it was used in chess, then its successor in French, *dame* and after the death of the medieval chess, *peón* in Spanish, *pion* in French, and *pedina* in Italian. The other parent seems to have been **alquerque**, which provided the number of men and the method of capture.

According to Murray the alquerque was a kind of checkers game with no crowning. Checkers originated by adding the crowning taken from chess. This happened in the eleventh century in southern France. Checkers is a cross between two other games, known as chess and alquerque. Checkers was created when the crowning was added to the medieval board game, the alquerque (Murray, 1952: 75).

### **1966 Kruijswijk:**

Kruijswijk sort of followed Murray, but forwarded the period a century ahead and according to Kruijswijk the alquerque never knew the crowning:

*Alquerque Laat niet met zich damspel vereenzelvigen, want het voor de speelfiguren in alquerque spel is de kans op niet promotie weggelegd (Kruijswijk, 1966: 51-56).*

### **Loose translation:**

Alquerque cannot be identified with checkers, because the fate of the crowning has not been reserved in the game.

### **1981 Dr. Arie van der Stoep:**

Checkers is exactly the same game as the medieval alquerque game - that means, both games knew crowning, but passing from a striped board (alquerque) to a chequered board (Van der Stoep, 1984:7). Van der Stoep argued in a letter (1993a) that checkers was played in Spain in 1283 on an alquerque board, therefore using crowning.



### **1989 Govert Westerveld:**

In a long letter dated 05/30/1989 he informed Van der Stoep that alquerque, as it was indicated by king Alfonso X the Wise in 1283, had nothing to do with checkers, but that it was only a precursor of it. There were still more facts to defend his position in a better way, but the time were not very conducive to this.

### **1992 Ir. Gerard Bakker:**

Checkers originated when a crowning queen (queen) was attributed to the pawns in the medieval board game of alquerque, inspired by chess. This happened in the 16th century in Spain. *Bakker* flatly declares that alquerque did not know the crowning:

Het middeleeuwse twaalfstukken (= alquerque) valt niet onder damspel, omdat (...) het geen promotie kende (Bakker, 1992: 64-69)

### **Loose Translation:**

The medieval game with a set of 12 pieces (= alquerque) is not a checkers game, because (...) it did not know the crowning.

## **THE ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD ALQUERQUE**

The critical etymological dictionary by Corominas (1987) defines it:

Tic Tac Toe game, from the Arab **qirq** Id. 1a. doc: 1283, Acedrex Books (Alfonso X the Wise).

Freytag, III, 431.b defines it: **trium scruporum ludus** and defines in detail (Freytag, 1830-1837)

Dozy, Gloss, (1869: 185) considers it of uncertain origin.



**Prof. Reinhart P. A. Dozy**

*Neuvonen* (1941:196). Pedro de Alcalá (PALc). shows the Arabic variant: **Querque** (Alcalá, 1505), which should well refer to this game, since PalC. follows Nebrija's nomenclature and it only records *alquerque*, calculorum ludus ".

Also the Portuguese word **alquerque**. The **English** qualification that Guevara (1539) applies to **alquerque** should not be taken literally.

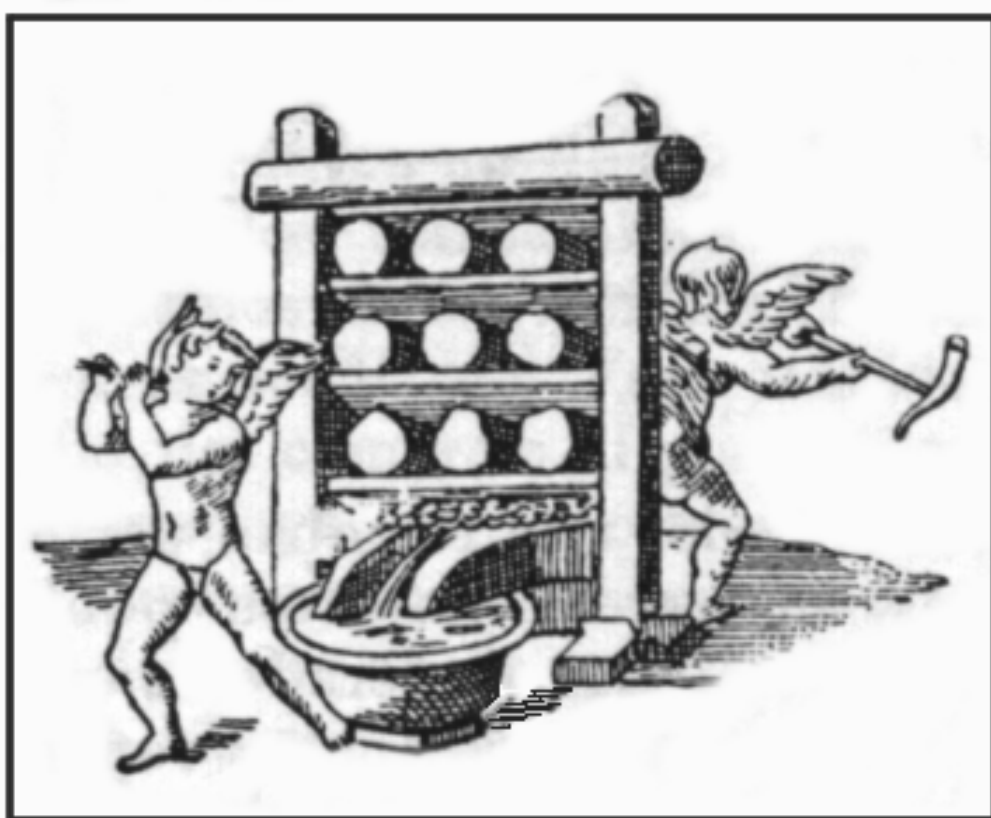
The Illustrated Universal Encyclopedia (1986 Volume 4 p. 926) shows:

Alquerque (Etim. - Del ár. *alcarc.*) m. Tres en raya, juego de muchachos. Ver Raya.

**Loos translation:**

Alquerque (Etim -.*Alcarc* Ar) Tic Tac Toe, a game. See Raya.

Nowadays the alquerque is the space at the oil mills, in which after the first squeezing the pomace crumbles to extract the oil. Specifically this part of the oil mill is formed by a channel of geometric system of lines. Therefore it is likely that the popularity of this game gave the name to the oil mill and not vice versa. In other languages we can also see the use of the mill, such as in German - Mühle, Dutch - molenspel, Danish - nölle and Swedish -qvarn.



**Roman oil press time**

In alquerque (2x9) is used the term *fazer ferred*, nowadays called Tic Tac Toe, from the manuscript of Alfonso X the Wise (1283). Could you perhaps refer *fazer ferred* (a jump or the capture of an opponent's piece) to the mechanism in the oil mill in which the second squeezing takes place?

Dozy (1869) says that alquerque is of uncertain origin; as the *Acad* (1884) and *Eguílaz* (1836), alquerque could come from qáraq or qáriq – a flat and smooth place, only in Freytag (1830-1837) the word is attributed to the same source. We could not consult Dozy (1881) and Schiaparelli (1871).

The etymology of the word alquerque is misleading. It probably originates from the Arabic word qirq, quirqa. I think it is of Arabic-Spanish origin, because the Moors played and this game (Prisons, 1905: 5; White, 1897: 36-38 to 67-69; White, 1899: 2-5) since the eighth century Spain and they had their own language. Murray (1952: 37) failed to find alquerque in Arabic, but we still need to know whether he researched well enough and studied the Arabic literature of Spain. The Moors enjoyed playing this game in Spain, and logically it is more convenient to search the origin of the word first in Spanish-Moorish and not in Latin. The word is in the *Quamûs* dictionary (*Qamus*, 1400), written by Pedro de Alcalá (1505) and Lopez Tamarid (1585). More research is needed, and we cannot exclude what Van der Stoep (1984: 76) wrote about Zamboni (1973: 11-61). The linguist says:

er zijn geen Arabische bewijspplaatsen alquerque met in er is geen zou het Arabisch woord waarop kunnen teruggaan Het komt voor alleen in Spanje.. De Spaanse woordvoorraad is vooral Latijns, Sp. Alquerque teruggaan kan op Lat. Calcul (us) want is in LR wisseling een Europese talen of gewoon heel.

**Loose translation:**

There are not any Arab evidential texts about alquerque, nor an Arabic word that can be equivalent. It is only found in Spanish. The Spanish vocabulary comes mostly from Latin, alquerque (in Spanish) may refer to the Latin calcul (us), since a change of LR is quite normal in European languages.

Four alquerque boards together that form 8 x 8 squares were found in the plate closing the roof of the temple of Kurna in Egypt, which is dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century BC. This way the alquerque board formed a chessboard (Murray, 1952: 19). (Subsequently revoked by Murray).

A writing in *Kitab al-Aghani* in 967 mentions an inhabitant in Mecca who kept chess games (ASJ-sjatronjat), board games (an-nardat), and alquerque games (qirqat) at home for entertainment of his guests (Fiske, 1905: 255).

As it can be inferred from a sentence by Ibn Abdun, a type of alquerque game (qirq) was practiced in the 12th century in Sevilla, and certainly in the rest of Andalucía on which fans sometimes played passionately their last dirham (Lévi-Provençal, 1955). Ibn Abdun's work has been quoted in literature several times (Lévi-Provençal, 1934: 177-299; Lévi Provençal, 1947: 118; Lévi Provençal, 1948, Aryeh, 1987: 318).

The alquerque board, with an initial placement of 12 pieces on both sides, was first found in an image from an English manuscript originally from Cerne Abbey, Dorsetshire. The manuscript was written in the second half of the 13th century and is preserved in Trinity College, Cambridge. (Kruijswijk, 1966: 48)

In the Qamus dictionary (1414) the word **alquerque** is found next to an image of the most used boards by then (Qamus, 1400). Today this word is no longer found in modern Arabic dictionaries and has been replaced by the word *Dris* (Murray, 1952: 75).

In Saint Mary of Cavendish's Church, Suffolk, an alquerque board was drawn on a burial in 1570 (Kruijswijk, 1966: 48)

## DESCRIPTIONS OF ALQUERQUE IN LITERATURE

### c. 1250 *Vetula*

The first mention of alquerque is found in a Latin work from the first part of the 13th century. It is known by us as: *De Vetula* (Fournival, 1225; Fournival; 1470; Cocheris, 1861) and it is attributed to Richard of Fournival (c 1200 - c 1254). This paper refers to alquerque and mill with respectively 12 and 9 pieces (Kruijswijk, 1966: 46).

Book 1, verse 34

"Ludi parvi alii sunt quos scire puellas  
Esse dixi decens: parva sed movere pudebat  
Nuncque magis, quam tunc, pudet illa referre minority.  
Quare ludos praetereo ibi lapillos parva,  
Nunc bis sex, novem nunc vero, captain one tabella.  
Ac ubi sunt bis sex, former captain hostilibus illum  
Ultra quem salit alteruter: nec ibi deciorum  
Exigitur jactus. Vero novem Ubi bene ludunt  
Cum deciis, et eis fine, quando volunt ".

### **Loose translation:**

There are other simple games, of which I have said  
that are decent for young girls to know,  
but it is not convenient for me to take what I have  
for granted. And now more than ever it is not appropriate  
to remember these poorly valued issues. So...  
these games where some little pieces, sometimes nine,  
other times twelve are captured in a board, and when

there are twelve, the enemy piece is taken jumping above it. It is not even mandatory to throw a dice. However, when there are nine of them, it is actually played with a dice and it is over whenever you want it to be.

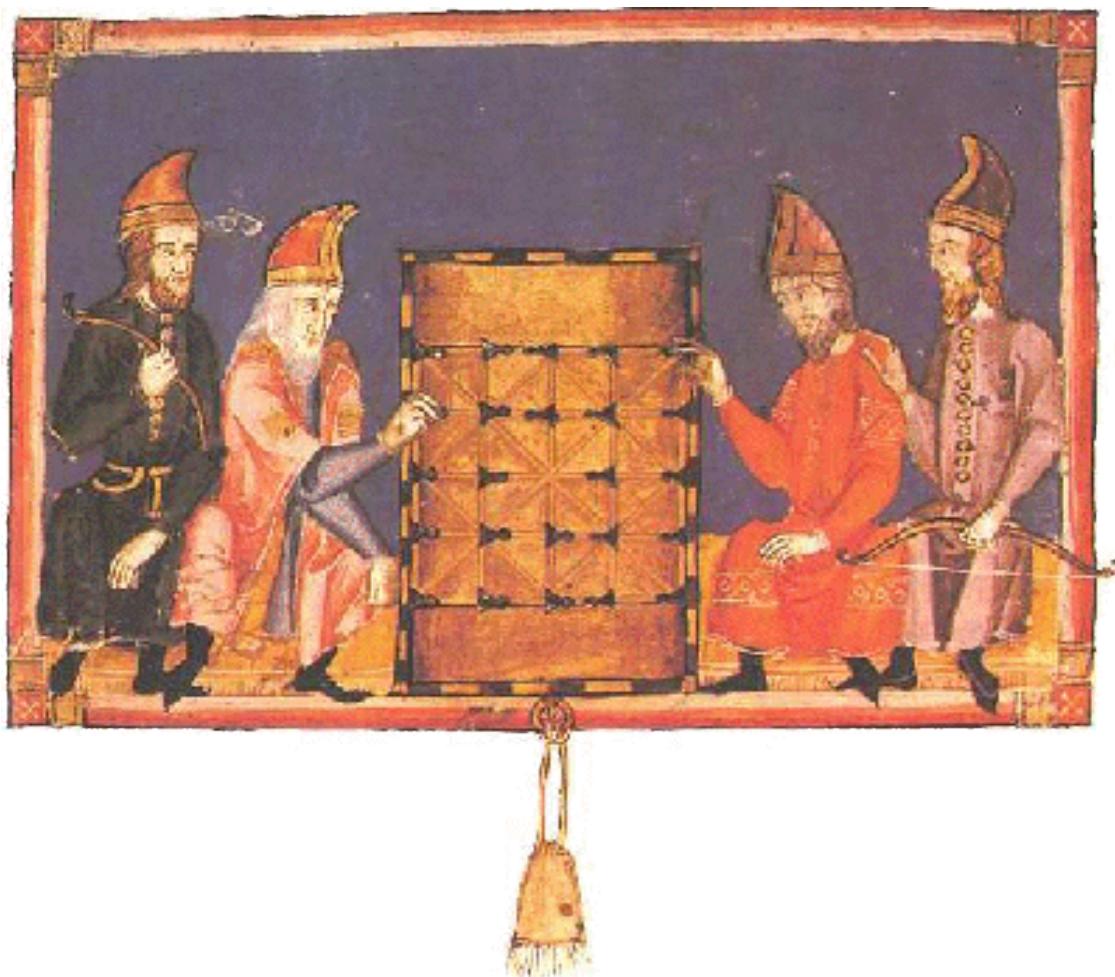
## **1283 King Alfonso X the Wise**

The wisdom recognized in the peaceful King Alfonso X the Wise was undoubtedly rooted in the spread of oriental culture not only in Spain, but throughout the West. The Castilian king in his time was able to gather around him the most specialized Christian, Jewish, and Arab intellectual world and thus wise beautiful manuscripts were written. One was an important work discussing games (Brunet and Bellet, 1887:412-430; Brunet and Bellet, 1887: 41-44; Steiger 1941; Garcia Morencos, 1977; Garcia Morencos, 1978:17-28; White 1913 to 1958; Janer, 1871:60-68; Janer, 1874:225-255; Trend 1933, N° 81:393-403; Meissenburg, 1973: A512-A516; Meissenburg, 1983:50-52).

Here we reflect the text as King Alfonso X the Wise discusses it in his work in relation to alquerque (Alfonso X the Wise, 1283):

Este es ell alquerque de doze que iuega con todos sus trebeios:  
Pves fablado auemos en los libros desuso de todas las maneras de los iuegos dell acedrex e de los dados e delas tablas, segunt aquellos tres sabios dieron la muestra al rey, e depues los departieron los omnes sabidores de iogar, queremos agora aqui dezir de otros iuegos que fallaron depues los omnes, que non son encuentra destos sobredichos, e pero an parte en ellos, assi como los alquerques que tannen all acedrex e a las tablas e a los dados. E tales y a que tannen all acedrex e a las tablas, e no a los dados. E comencaremos primeramiente en ell alquerque de doze por que es mayor de todos los otros alquerques, e se iuega con mas trebeios. Et diremos en quantas maneras se iuega e con quantos trebeios, e por qual razon ha en el parte, acedrex e tablas e

dados. Ell acedrex ha en ell parte por que se iuega por seso, e ell alquerque otrossi, e los trebeios con que se iuega semeian a los peones dell acedrex.



**The alquerque-12 game of King Alfonso X the Wise**

E a las tablas: por el mannar que se mannan el iuego, segundo el suyo, e por las sennales o ponen los trebeios. E han y parte los dados por la uentura, ca assi como lancan en auentura los dados en el tablero, a qui haya la mano, assi echan en el alquerque suertes otrossi en auentura qui iuegue primero. E iuegasse en esta manera: en ell alquerque ha de auer ueynt y cinco logares do se puedan poner los trebeios, e los trebeios an a seer ueynt y quatro, e ponen los doze duna color dun cabo e los otros doze



dell otra cabo en az. E finca un logar uazio en medio poro se cometa el iuego. E el que ha la mano, ha peoria, por que ha de iogar por fuerca en aquel logar uazio. Et pon ell otro iogador el su trebeio en aquel mismo logar ondel salio, e lieua aquel que mouio primero, passando sobre duna casa a otra enderecho, segunt ua la raya derecha dell alquerque, e sobre quantos trebeios assi passare todos los leuara, e esso mismo fara ell otro iogador. Et toda uia el que ouo la mano, ha de mouer primero guisando como lieue algun trebeio de los dell otra parte.

Et ell otro iogador guardasse muy mejor por y, ca entiendo el iuego quel quiere fazer, guarda el su trebeio por y mejor, e faz le esso mismo que ell otro cueyda a el fazer, e por esta razon ha peoria el que ha la mano. Et el que peor guarda sus trebeios e los mas ayna pierde, es uençudo. Et si amos los iogadores lo sopieren iogar, comunalmiente puede se mannar. Et esta es la figura dell alquerque e delos juegos e de como estan puestos en sus casas.

### **Loose translation:**

This is the alquerque 12 played with all its chessmen (pieces):

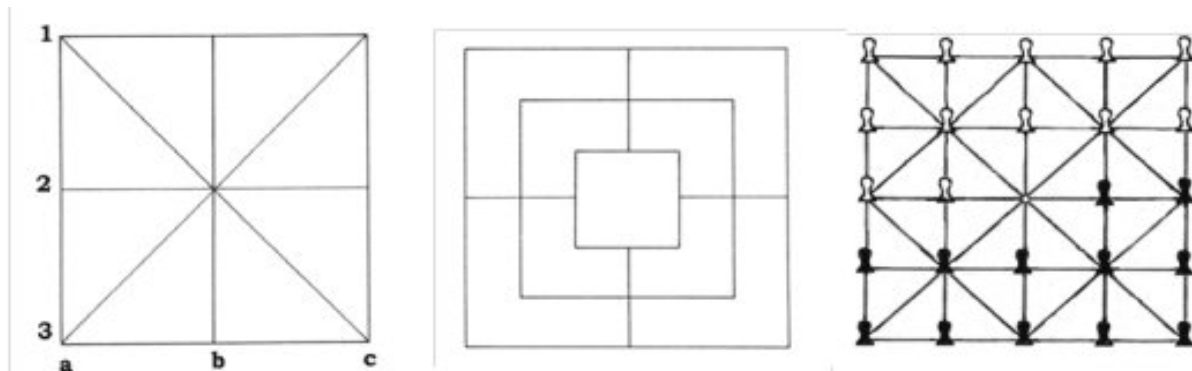
So we will have spoken in the books about the use of all manner of chess games and the dice and tables, as shown by those three wise men brought to the king and then taught the knowledgeable people to play, now we want to talk here about other games found after the men, who were not taken into account but somehow depend on them. We'll start with the alquerque 12, because it is the greatest of all the other alquerque, and it is played with more pieces. And we will explain in what ways you play it and with how many pieces, and why it is somehow part of chess. This is because it is played with the head, and the pieces are similar to the chess pawns.

And they have their luck in the dice, since the dice that is thrown on the board decides who opens the game. And it must be played like this: There must be twenty-five holes (squares) where you can place the pieces, which have to be twenty. Then put twelve

of one color on one side and the other twelve on the other side respectively grouped. An empty place in the middle where the game starts is left. The one that plays first has it worse, because he mandatorily has to play over that empty hole. And the other player puts his piece on the same hole that his opponent formerly was, then releases (the one) who moved first, moving from one square to the other one ahead, and jumping over all the pieces this way he will take all of them out (removing them from the board), and so will do the other player. And so on, the one in power must move first capturing whenever he can the other pieces.

The other player must beware as much as possible, understanding the moves he wants to make, doing the best to keep his pawns, and do the same thing the other does to capture his pieces, and this is the reason why the first player has it worse. And the one that fails at saving his pieces, and loses most of them, is defeated. And if the two players know how to play, they could engage. And this is the figure of alquerque and these kinds of games and how they are placed in their homes.

The following works are concerned about the philological features: Bossong (1978: 48-68), Sachs (1936: 183-188), Niederehe (1975: 25), *General Society* (1987: 37). The history of chess was written by Meyer (1977: 181-206), Sánchez (1929: 121), Trend (1933: 303-403), Orbeli (1936: 16), Good Companion (1916: 65-69). And finally the history of general knowledge was discussed by Wollesen (1990: 277-308), Benary (1928: 333-335), Guerrero (1956: 42-49), Lopez (1973: 135-138) and Dominguez (1976).



**Alquerque-3**

**Alquerque-9**

**Alquerque-12**

### **The alquerque 12 game was played this way:**

1. The tablet has 25 points of intersection.
2. Each player has 12 paws, 2 rows of 5 squares, and a third row with the right 2 squares.
3. In the center of the board there is a vacant intersection point.
4. The dice determine who opens the game.
5. Capturing is required both in orthogonal and diagonal direction, forwards and back.
6. The pawn moves both orthogonally and diagonally, forwards and back.

### **1432 Juan Alfonso de Baena**

*Juan Alfonso de Baena* (1406-1454) was a Spanish writer born in Baena. He belonged to a Jewish family, but later turned to the Catholic religion and the King John II of Castile named him his secretary. One of his most important works is the *Cancionero de Baena* which was published in 1499. He was friends with the Constable of Alvaro de Luna by then and other important members of the Court. These people spent their poems in the form of rogatory.

### III apéndice: Desir que fiso Juan Alfonso de Baena

(Baena, 1432/1993:768)

(.....) p. 768 - Pues, señor, quien bien acata/los Infantes que padesçen,/ comoquier que se basteçen/fortuna los desbarata,/son corridos fasta Mata/de ser dentro en Alburquerque/este fuego de alquerque/malo es si no se amate.

(anno 1432: resistencia de los Infantes *Don Pedro* y *Don Enrique* en Alburquerque.)



Book about Alvaro de Luna (Milan, 1546)

## **Loose translation:**

**Appendix III:** Appendix III: narrative Juan Alonso de Baena made (Baena, 1432/1993:768)

Well, Sir, who respects good,  
Infants who suffer,  
like those who put a fortune wasting,  
be exiled to the village of Mata,  
being in Alburquerque,  
that fire of Alquerque,  
is bad if one does not extinguish it.

(Year 1432: opposition from the Infants Don Pedro and Don Enrique in Alburquerque).

## **ANTONIO DE NEBRIJA**

He was a Spanish performer born in 1444 in Nebrija and died in 1522. He spent many years in Italy studying the ancient Latin and Greek languages. After his return he became a professor of Latin in Salamanca and later in Alcalá de Henares. He also mastered the Hebrew language and was one of the most prominent humanists in the 15th century. His knowledge of Latin could not be reached by anyone at the time. Nebrija had a broad knowledge in many sciences. He wrote many works.

Nebrija (1495) supports this word in his dictionary and made it famous as follows:

**Alquerque** = calculorum ludus



**Elio Antonio de Nebrija**

## HERNANDO 1517 ALONSO HERRERA

Hernando Alonso of Herrera was a Spanish humanist who lived in the 15th and 16th centuries. Born around 1460 in Talavera de la Reina, he probably went to the University of Salamanca, where Nebrija was teaching. For some years he taught grammar and rhetoric at the University of Alcalá de Henares until he left in 1513. He also taught rhetoric in 1517 at the University of Salamanca. He continued living in this city until his death in 1528. Many works appeared in his hands (Universal Encyclopedia 1980, volume 27: 1268).

One of his works was: *Disputatio adversus Aristotelem aristotelicosque sequaces*. This work was dedicated to Cardinal Ximenes and is bilingual. The Latin text is on even pages and the Castilian text on odd pages.

Adolfo Bonilla and San Martín (1920/1964, No. 50) dedicated deep and scholarly research to this writer.

Act II: Diego de Herrera and Master Pedro. It is the place of different, and celaren apparatus. (Page 123)

### ALQUERQUE

"Pues quiero hazer como en el juego del axedrez o **alquer**, <et in ludo latruncularum calculorumque> que, quando la una parte se maravilla como le han vencido, buelvense a retratar todos los trechos que han pasado. Assi agora, que estays espantado como os he concludido, repitase por orden lo passado, porque, si de algo os arrepentis, os alçeys dello, y lo que aveis confessado vaya por no dicho. Ca esta nuestra disputa no es contiendas, sino busqueda de la verdad..."

### Loose translation:

"Well, I want to do this like in a game of chess or alquerque, when one player is shocked at how he has been defeated, all the previous games are replayed. So now that you are afraid of the way I have concluded, I insist, may the past be repeated in order, because if there is something you regret, you must get over it, and whatever you have confessed, pretend no words have been said. That is not our war, but our search for truth ... "

## **1528 ERASMUS**

Desiderius Erasmus was a famous writer and linguist born in Rotterdam in 1467 and died in 1536 in Basel. Erasmus belonged to the group of famous humanists in Europe in the 15th century.



**Desiderius Erasmus**

Chil. III, XXVIII ad Cent II. Civitates ludimus. Lusus quoddam genus is in quo ludebatur calculis olim, quos antiquitus poleis vocabant id est cities. Neoterici (.....), hoc est, (.....) appellare coeperunt regions.



Usurpavit adagium Oratinus in Fugitivis. Hic locus est Nimirum or fallor, quem Julius Pollux citat Rerum book Vocabulis nono: (...) ie civitatem Pandioniam regis, supra modum adulatricis Nosti quam dicimus, is civitatem Canem et quam ludunt.

Desiderius Erasmus

Text in the true Adag. Chil. III Cent II ad XXVIII: (Erasmus, 1540)

Genus autem lusus describit his verbis: qui vero complurium calculorum dicitur lusus laterunculus est regiones in se continens, in lineis sitas. Et laterunculus quidam ipse civitas appellatur. Caeterum unusquisque calculus canis. Porro cum calculi sint duobus distincti coloribus, lusus haec ars est, ut, comprehensis duobus calculis unicoloribus, eum, qui diversi coloris est, tollas è medio. Allusit ad hoc proverbium Plato lib. De Republica IV: Nam illarum unaquaeque plurimae sunt civitates, non civitas, quemadmodum dicere solent ludentes. Refert Zenodotus, quanquam idem adagii sensum non indicat. Quare cuique, quod vero proximum videatur, conjectandum relinquo. Mihi quadraturum videtur, quoties suum quisque commodum quacunque sectatur via et aemulo, competitorique modis omnibus tendit insidias. Qui lusus frequens est in aulis principum, et in magistratibus publicis. Ab hoc lusu manasse videtur, qui nunc vulgo scacarius dicitur.

### **Loose translation:**

#### **We practice *the game of cities*.**

We played with cities. This is a kind of game that was played in ancient times with pieces that the ancients called poleis, and modern chôrai **places**. The adagium used *Cratinus* with ts **refugees**. According to the passage that, if I'm not mistaken, Julius Pollux quoted in his 9<sup>th</sup> Book: *A city of an extraordinary*

*praising King*; You know what we mean, dog and city, the game described as follows what the game is:

The game played with many pieces required a board with places (tables), which were on stripes. Game pieces are divided by color into two parts and the technique of the game is to capture a piece of a color between two pieces of another color and remove the board.

Plato refers to the saying in Book 4 of the Republic, each of which has a large number of towns and not a city, as people say when playing the game. The game *Zenodotus* is mentioned, but does not indicate what adagium means, and therefore each is free to determine what approximates the truth most closely. I think it refers to a situation where everyone stands with all the means at its disposal its own interests and where it can get traps for your enemies and opponents. This type of game is widely practiced in the courts of kings and among people in government service. The game seems to be a forerunner of what is today called the game of chess.

## **1529 ANTONIO DE GUEVARA**

He was a Spanish prelate and writer born in Treceño (Asturias) in 1480? and died in Valladolid in 1545. His father took him to the court of the Catholic Monarchs when he was only 12 years old. Many years later he became Carlos V's preacher, counselor, and writer. As if this was not enough, he was also the inquisitor of Valencia, Bishop of Gaudix and Mondoñedo afterwards. Therefore this writer was a person of great reputation and had great benefits.

This author mentioned the following phrase in one of his books (Guevara, 1529)

Los viejos jugauan a los dados por la plaças, las mugeres jugauan al alquerque en las huertas.

**Loose translation:**

The old played dice in the squares, women played alquerque in the orchards.

**1539 ANTONIO DE GUEVARA**

We find this author one more time. In another book about sea trips he states (Guevara, 1539):

Es privilegio de galera que alli todos tengan libertad de jugar a la primera de Alemania, a las tablas de Borgoña, al alquerque inglés, al tocadillo viejo, al parar ginovisco, al flux catalán, a la figurilla gallega, al triunfo francés, a la calabriada morisca, a la ganapierte romana, y al tres dos y as boloñés, y todos estos juegos se disimulan jugar con dados falsos y con naipes señalados.

**Loose translation:**

It is Galley's privilege to have everyone free to play *a la primera* of Germany, the Burgundy's *tablas*, the English alquerque, the old *tocadillo*, the *parar ginovisco*, the Catalan *flux*, the Galician *figurilla*, French *triumfo*, the Moorish *calabriada*, the Roman *win-lose*, and the *three two*, and the Bolognese *as*. All these games are played with false dice and marked cards.

The alquerque practiced here with dice was probably the known Nine Man Morris, which is originally the alquerque 9.

## 1540 JUAN LUIS VIVES



**Juan Luis Vives**

Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540) was a Spanish philosopher and humanist, one of the biggest of the Renaissance, who lived almost all his life outside Spain. Vives wrote many books and one of them is of interest to us:

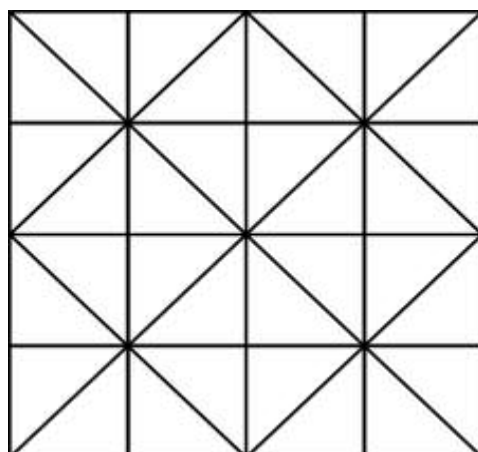
We found in one of his books:  
Domum reditus, et lusus childish  
**Corneliola:** Ludi lujus taedet  
jam, ludamus discoloribus calculi  
(Vives, 1538)

In French text: Ce ieu commence  
à m'ennuyer, (...) iouons aux  
dames (Jamin, 1573)

In Spanish text: Este juego ya me tiene cansado, (...) juguemos al  
**alquerque** (Vives, 1555)

In the Latin and French texts we found a drawing of an alquerque 12 board.

The renaissance games at the time of Juan Luis Vives were described by Renson (1982: 469-487).



**Draw of the Alquerque-12 in the book of 1538**

## **1544 CAELIUS CALCAGNINUS**

He studied part of the treatise **De Calculis** which is entitled **In Ludo Calculario XII**, and quickly understands that the professor of Greek and Latin, Caelius Calcagninus describes the alquerque game (a precursor of checkers). At the time the game was known throughout Western Europe. He drew in choir stalls and played in the galleys. A study book for Latin scholars (popular in Belgium) shows even a drawing of a board. Perhaps this game had in the Netherlands the name of twaelfstecken. The reason that such a wise man was occupied with this game was a thought originally from a classic time, and therefore it had to be of a high quality. And you might think of the mysterious set of 5 lines mentioned by Julius Pollux and / or the game polis or city (also called soldiers' game). As well as the humanists Freigius, Raderus, and Senftlebius thought that Calcagninus was describing alquerque (Jansen, 1991: 3). Ficoroni (1734) gives a brief Italian translation of Calcagninus's article, in which he emphasizes the placement of the 10 pieces + 2 leaders.



**Celio Calcagnini ca. 1520**  
**Philadelphia Museum of Art. CC-BY-3.0 - Sailko**

1.

Quae omnia in calculis diversa sunt, nam et lineae quinque XVI quadris, seu regiones vel urbes malis appellare, implentur.

2.

Ad in ludo calculario XII ad summum manipulones, in duas decurias et praestites duos laterales centuriati, totam militiam exercent, in quibus tamen disciplinam explicandae aciei agnoscere. Siquidem in fronte iugati sunt ordines per quinarium numerum: altitudo autem triplici acie instructa est, ut cubitos occupet XII.

3.

Expedito enim et ordinato militi cubita quatur tribuuntur. Quom vero farissa cubita XIII prortendatur, ita ut extremi ordinis vel (si lubet sic dixisse) triarii farissa non sit inutilis, quae cubitis duobus infesta in hostem exporrigatur.

4.

Haec est imago illa militiae quam calculis expressam volvere, alioqui ei qui suo loco excessisset, praesto fuit poena, ut circurventus in manus hostium perveniret: quod quomodo facile fiat, si latera agminis enudetur, ob id constitutum accepimus, ne quis de sacra linea, id est media decedat, cui laterales praestites praefecti sunt. Ea enim prodita tum caetera acies incursionibus hostium facile patet.

5.

Ab eadem ratione militari deductum est, ut miles qui castra hostium penetrarit, et in arces evaserit, quasi murali corona donatus, virtutis ergo late impune pervagetur: nec nisi ter circumventus succubuisse iudicetur.

6.

Illud praeterea hostimentum in utroque agmine servabatur: ut quasi collatis signis vir viro implexus confligeret: et quorum altera parte cornu pelleretur, altera hostem urgeret: ut ita in tota concertatione commutato victoriae ordine paria fierent (Calcagninus, 1544).

**Pratesi (1993:32-34)** reflects on a brief description and a translation about the work of **Calcagnini**:

This work is often quoted as one of the first descriptions clearly distinguishing between chess and **ludus latrunculorum**. Another merit may be the quotation of the game which we know as tangram: it came to Europe from China about two centuries ago, but evidently it was already known to classical civilisations. Calcagnini's language has lost the grace of classical Latin; moreover the text is affected by several printing errors. Thus the treatise has yet to be fully understood, at least in some parts.

1.

(With respect to chess) all that is different and five lines form 16 squares, namely regions or cities, as you prefer to name them.

2.

But in the boardgame of pebbles 12 soldiers to the top, ordered in two groups of ten and two lateral chiefs, exert all the army, and you can realise in them the art of deploying the military array. Indeed, in the front the orders are connected by number V: on the other hand the thickness is established by a triple array, so that it occupies 12 squares.

3.

In fact, to a quick and ordered man 4 squares are assigned. Since however the ferse extends its action on 14 squares, so that the ferse of the outermost order or (if we may so say) the triple one will not be useless, it must be given to the enemy if attacked by two squares.

4.

This is that image of the army which is represented by moving with pebbles. Otherwise to that which went out from its own place, abruptly a punishment occurred, as it arrived surrounded in the hands of the enemies- a thing that easily would occur, if the flanks of the array had to be voided. Therefore, we consider ascertained that nobody should go out of the holy line, namely the middle one, to whom lateral officials are commanding. In fact, if it is abandoned then the remaining part of the array easily suffers the attacks of the enemy.

5.

From the same military reason is derived that as a man enters the enemy camp and has access to the fortress, being awarded as if with a stone crown, it may wander about with impunity and may be considered to have been captured only if three times surrounded.



6.

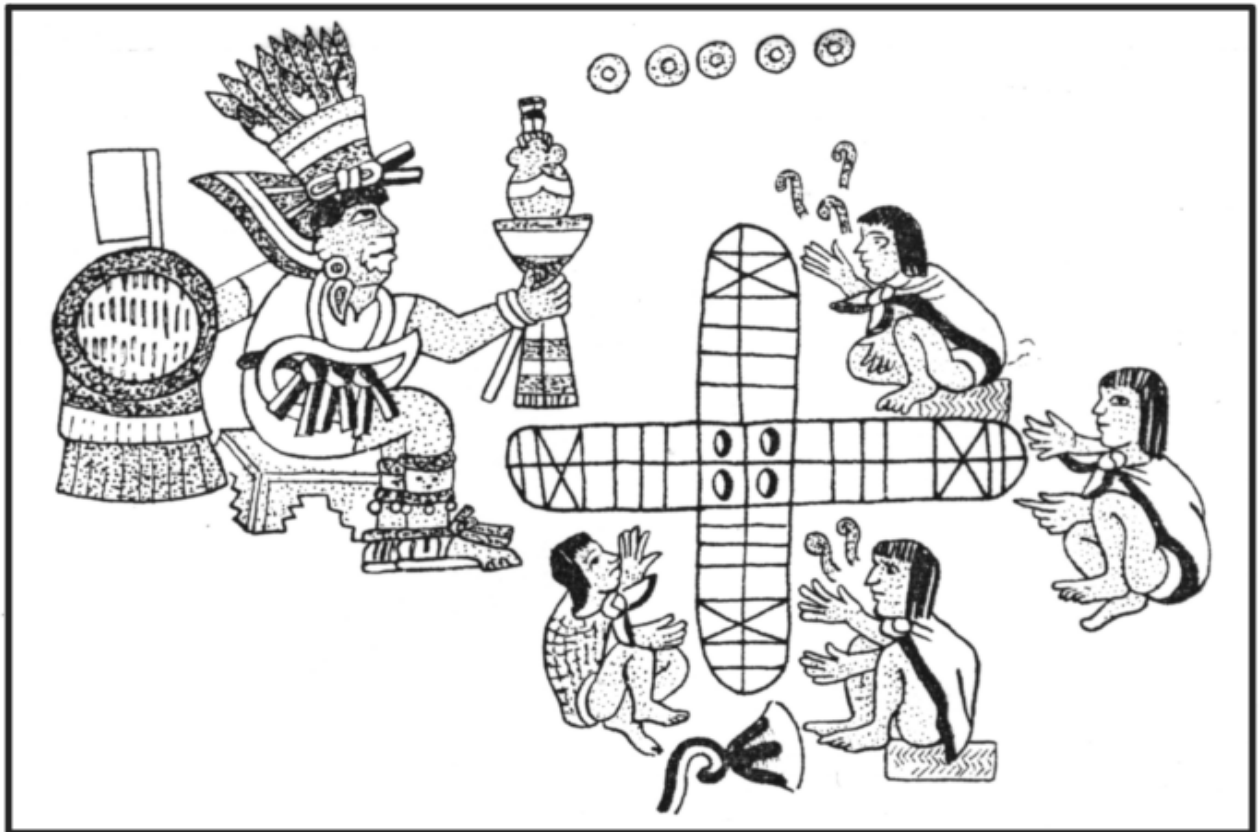
Moreover, in both arrays they followed this reciprocation: that with the signs brought together one fights man to man; and of them one is driven to the corner while the other will push the enemy; so that in the whole struggle by changing the order of the victory it becomes equal.

### 1553 FRANCISCO LOPEZ DE GOMARA

Famous European historian born in Seville in 1510 and deceased in 1560. He studied humanities at the University of Al Creek Henares and was ordained priest. Around 1540 he was chaplain of the house and family of the famous conquistador Hernán Cortés. He wrote a book on the History of the Indies, in which, with great knowledge, he described the conquest of Mexico. The work was published in 1552 in Zaragoza.

The word *alquerque* described in the Historical Dictionary of the Spanish Language (1933-1936):

Conq. Mexico 42a: Algunas vezes miraua *Moteccuma* como jugavan al Patoliztlik que parece mucho al juego de las tablas. Y que se juega con havas, o frisoles (....). Los quales menean entre ambas manos. Y los echan sobre una estera. (....) donde hay ciertas rayas, como **alquerque**.



**Gamblers playing Patolli**

**Loose translation:**

Sometimes Motecucuma watched as they played patoliztlik that seems much like a tric-tac game; and that they play with beans or white beans (.....). They move them between the hands. They throw it on a mat (....) where certain lines are present, such as in the Alquerque game.

**1558, CRISTOBAL DE VILLALON**

Cristobal de Villalon (1505-1558) was a Spanish writer born in Villalón or in Valbuena de Duero in the early sixteenth century. He studied at the University of Alcala de Henares, where he learned Greek and theology, without ordaining himself as a priest. From 1530-1545

he worked probably for a time as a professor at the University of Valladolid, retiring in 1557 to a small town to write his last book *Spanish Grammar*. 1558 is usually indicated as the year of his death. We find in his book *The Scholástico* (Villalon, 1558/1967) what follows:

II, cap. 17: (...) De los inventores de los juegos. Pelota. Lucha. Naypes. Axedrez. Carnicoles. Los Dados. Alquerque. Xaldeta. Ingeniosos y apazibles para se recrear: porque segun Valerio dize, *Scevola* fue el primero que invento el juego de la pelota: y Hercules sobrellevo sus incomparables trabajos con el juego de la lucha y punaceste que el invento: y Palamedes estando sobre Troya por pasar el largo sitio invento los naipes: *Mangrolina* halle el axedrez, el qual fue tan diestro en el jugar que sin ver el tablero jugava paseandose por una sala con grandes jugadores. Los griegos inventaron el juego de los carnicoles: los mauros inventaron el juego de los dados: los hespañoles inventaron el juego del alquerque que llaman por otro nombre del castro: tambien los mesmos inventaron la jaldeta.

#### **Loose translation:**

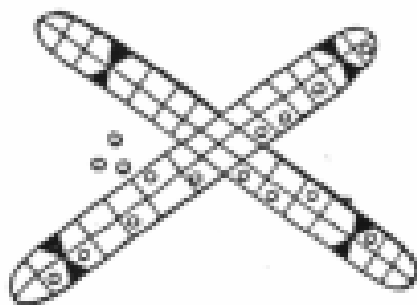
II, ch. 17: (...) From the inventors of the games. Ball. Fight. Naypes. Axedrez. Carnicoles. The dice. Alquerque. Xaldeta. Ingeniosos and apazibles to be rebuilt: because according to Valerio saith, *Scevola* was the first who invented the game of ball: Hercules and I bear his incomparable work with the fight game and punaceste the invention: and being on Troy by Palamedes spending long siege invention the cards: *Mangrolina* played chess so cleverly without even seeing the board, alone in a room with great players. The Greeks invented the game of carnicoles; Mauros invented the game of craps: the Spanish invented the Alquerque called by another name Castro; they also invented the Jaldeta.

Castro was in Spain at that time the name for the mill. We know this thanks to the famous manuscript of King Alfonso X the Wise which named this game Alquerque 9. The description by Cristobal de Villalon is confusing, because it presents the game alquerque 9 (Castro) as if it were a Spanish invention. However, this game of mill was already a very old game. Also see Castro.

## 1560 DOMINGO DE SANTO TOMAS

Missionary, Dominican and Spanish writer, he was born in Seville in 1499 and died in Lima in 1571. Then he departed in 1529 with the conquistador Francisco Pizarro in the same boat and headed for Panama. He devoted himself to the study of Peru Inca language and became such expert that he came to be compared with the great Antonio de Nebrija. In his hand appeared Art Quechua language, extensive dictionary with grammar on the indigenous Peruvian language. Many other books were written by him. (Universal Encyclopedia 1964, Volume 54, pp. 405-406). And so we have received the following about the game of alquerque (Santo Tomas, 1560/1951):

Alquerque	= comina, o taptana
acedrez	= taptana, o comina
trebejo de axedres	= taptana
taptana, o comina	= axedrez, tablas o alquerque



**Patolli**

## **1569 BERNARDINO DE SAHAGÚN (C. 1503 - 1590)**

Spanish Franciscan,, friar, and historian, he was born in Sahagún (León) in the early 16th century and died in Tlatelolco (Mexico) on February 5, 1590. He studied at the University of Salamanca and was sent to Mexico, along with 19 other religious officials, and since his arrival he devoted himself to the education of the Indians and the study of the Mexican language, which he mastered to perfection. He wrote several works. We know him for trilingual vocabulary in Latin, Spanish, and Aztec language and grammar. (Universal Encyclopedia 1985, Volume 52, pp. 1275). Thanks to his descriptions of Aztec customs we know the following:

El segundo pasatiempo que tenia era un juego, como de dados; hacian en un petate una cruz pintada, toda llena de cuadros, semejante al juego del alquerque, o castro, ... (Sahagún 1569/1969, libro 8, XVII,5, N° 3)

### **Loose translation:**

The second pastime they had was a game like dices; they made on a straw mat a painted cross, all full of squares, similar to the game of alquerque, or castro, ... (1569/1969 Sahagún, Book 8, XVII, 5, No. 3)

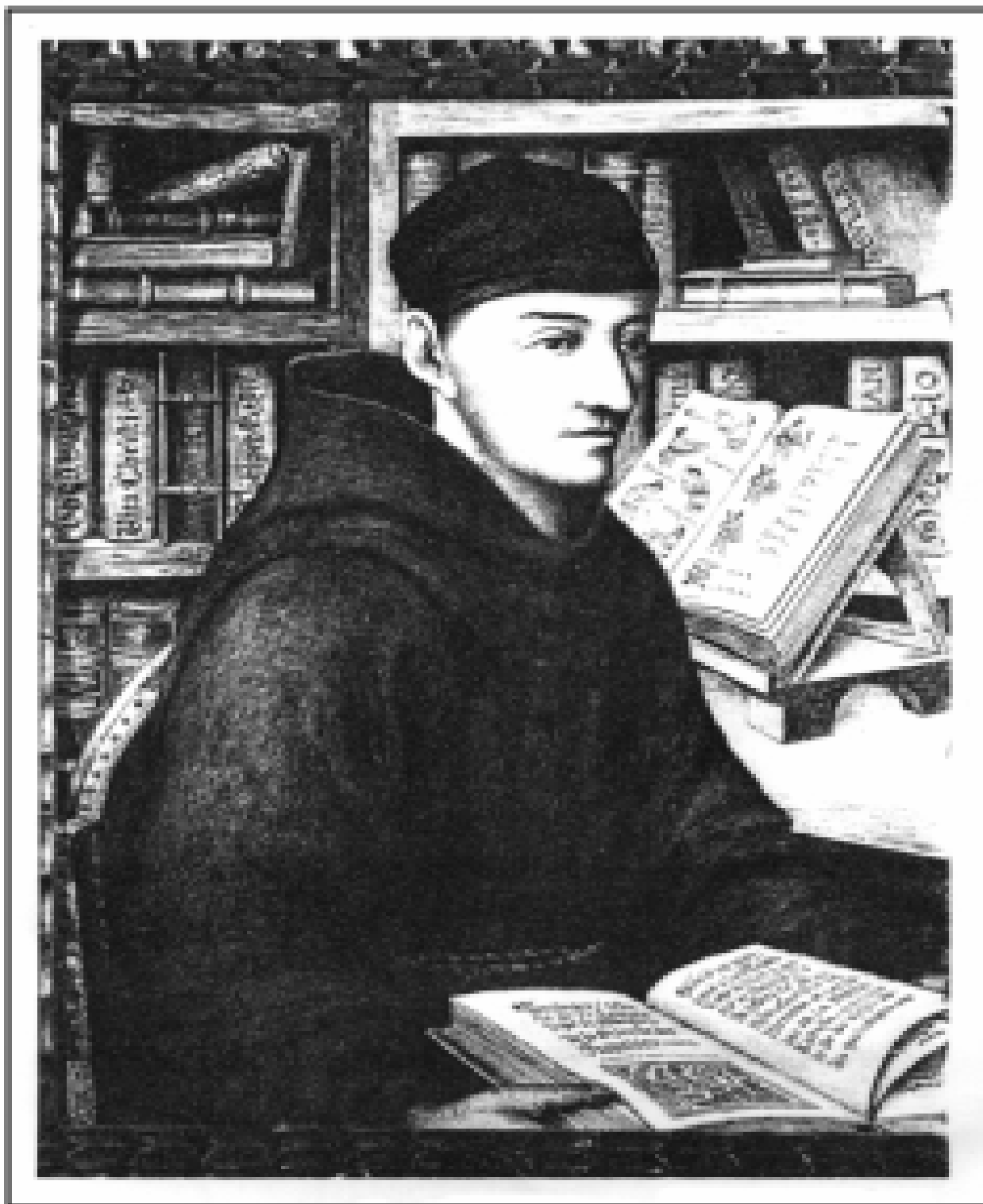


**The Patolli game**

(..) jugaban un juego que se llama patolli, que es como el juego del castro o alquerque, o casi, o como el juego de los dados.

**Loose translation:**

(..) They played a game called patolli, which is like the castro or alquerque game, or similar, or like the game of dices.



**The Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún**

## **1570 DIEGO DURÁN (1538-1588)**

Dominican religious historian and Hispanic-American, he was born in Mexico around 1538 and died in 1588. He was the son of a Spanish and an indigenous. He devoted himself to the study of the traditions and antiquities of his country, and wrote two works. (Universal Encyclopedia, 1985, Volume 18, p. 2562).

Nº3: Los cuales juegos eran muchos y diversos, con diferentes instrumentos y maneras. Jugaban el juego del alquerque, o de las damas, imitando el juego que nosotros jugamos del adxedris, prendiendose las chinas el uno al otro, las cuales servian de piedras, las unas blancas, las otras negras. (Durán c. 1570/1967, capítulo 22 p. 197 e.v.).

### **Loose translation:**

No. 3: Games which were many and diverse, with different instruments and ways. They play the alquerque or checkers game, imitating the game that we play with the chess (board), taking the stones one from the other, which served as pieces. One part had white ones and the other part had black ones (Duran c. 1570/1967, Chapter 22 p. 197 ev).

## **1578 JUAN DE CÓRDOVA (1503-1595)**

Spanish philologist and writer, he was born in Cordoba in 1503 and died in Oajaca (Mexico) in 1595. After studying Latin he embraced the profession of arms, but in 1543 decided to enter the convent of San Domingo and was ordained priest in 1548. Linguist and priest who lived half his life in Mexico made a vocabulary of the indigenous language and we know (Córdoba, 1578):



iuego of axedrez or alquerq (Quela huetèlayaga ticàani huetèlaye) alquerque (yyehuetela)

### **Loose translation:**

Chess or alquerque game (Quela huetèlayaga ticàani huetèlaye) alquerque (yyehuetela)

## **1580 FRANCISCO SANCHEZ DE LAS BROZAS (BROCENSE)**

Benedictine monk, Portuguese. Professed in Montserrat in 1577. He died there in 1604. He was versed in the Sacred Scriptures and in Hebrew, leaving at least a dozen documents, among them a Hebrew dictionary and the work *Commentarium in Ecclesiastem cum Concordia Vulgate Editionis et Hebraici textus* (*Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada 1985 deel 53, p. 1199; Sánchez, 1580*).

Alquerque = Arabic querque

## **1. 1593 JOHANN THOMAS FREIGINO**

Freigino was born in Freiburg in 1543 and died in Basilea in 1583. In 1567 he became Doctor in Philology and Law. He was also Professor in Basilea and Freiburg and in favor of the scientific theory of the Huguenots Ramus. Freigiuno was suspected of being associated with Protestantism.

Freigino did annotations in *Lud. Vivis, Extertationes dial. VI* about the alquerque board. Jansen indicates the year 1593. A precise reference is missing, if there is one, it is to the year 1622 (Freigius, 1662).



**Francisco Sanchez de las Brozas**

### c. 1600 FERNANDEZ OVIEDO

From the text that hereafter follows, it can be deduced that alquerque and marro (de punta) were the same line games.

Figura semejante a este tablero. c. 1600 Libro Cám. Real de Fdz Oviedo (ms. T88, 1870) 147 147 nota: Otro se dize Nauarra, y trae (de armas) un marro o **alquerque** de cadenos de oro en campo de gole vel sanguino. (Var. mas. E 110: trae en el escudo el marro o **alquerque** de las cadenas de oro); (Diccionario histórico, 1933-1936).

#### **Loose translation:**

Figure like this board. c. 1600 Libro Cám. Real de Fdz Oviedo (ms. T88, 1870) 147 147 note: Others speak about Nauarra, and bring (arms) a *marro* or alquerque of gold chain in *campo gole sanguino vel*. (Var more E 110: bears on his shield the *marro* or alquerque of gold chains); (Historical Dictionary, 1933-193)

### 1601 FRANCISCO DE ROSAL

A Spanish doctor, multilingual, and writer from the sixteenth century, he was born in 1560 and died in Cordoba. Studied medicine in Salamanca and after obtaining the PhD he started his practice in Zamora, Aranda, Burgos, and other towns for 30 years. He retired to his home town. He spoke French, Portuguese, Italian, German, English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. He wrote many works which were never published. One of them was Origin and etymology of all the original voices of the Castilian language (Rosal 1585, Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia 1985 52 p.339). From him we know the following:

### **Alquerque**

En arab. es juego, quizas corrupto de calculo lat. o calces, segun *Lucilio*, como nota festo. Franceses e italianos llaman **scalculo** y nos otros **escaque**, fingiendo un verbo **excalculari**, como en *Varron* **excuriari** y **excuncari** y descaminar que decimos en las rayas de los Reinos. Y asi dice *Scaligero* que los españoles fingimos el vocablo axedrez, como **exquadri**, perdida la silaba de enmedio, porque esquadrones y quadras son compañías de gente de guerra, y el juego de axedrez no es otra cosa que un real o exercito y campo formado.

### **Loose translation:**

In Arabic it is the name of a game, maybe the mutilated shape of the Latin calculo or calces, according to *Lucilio*, as nota festo. The French and Italians call it scalculo and we call it escaque, pretending a verb *excalculari*, like Varro *excuriari* and *excuncari* and misdirecting that we say in the lines (ways) of the kingdoms. So Scaligero says that the Spaniards think the word chess, as axedrez *exquadri*, by loss of the middle syllable because troops and quadres are companies of war figures, and nothing else than a king's army or army and formed camp.

## **2. 1603 FRANCISCO DE LUQUE FAXARDO**

This author also includes the word alquerque in his book of games and leaves to the women the choice of the name Damas instead of the alquerque game (Luque, 1603)

Mujeres en juego de naipes muy fuera es de sus limites; grandemente exceden y passan la raya de sus debidos ejercicios. Mirad, por vuestra vida, que juego de muñecas, que juego de alfileres, de alquerque, de las damas, bien à propósito de las que estiman este nombre.

### **Loose translation:**

Women playing cards out of their limits; they widely exceed their limitations and cross the line of their obligated excercises. Look at your life, keep you busy with puppetry, the pins game, the alquerque game, checkers, on purpose of them who prefer this name. (thus the name of damas).

### **1608 JULIUS POLLUX**

Greek grammarian and sophist, he was born in Naucratis (Egypt) in 135 and died in Athens in 188. Most of his work is lost. His work *Onomasticon* was published in Venice for the first time. The better edition is the Wetstein's printed in Amsterdam (Pollucis, 1706)

Seg. 100.4:

eundum cum ludo calculorum putant duodecim scruporum lusum qui Quintilliano dicatur (Pollux 1608; Pollucis 1706)

**Germanis**, der zwölfte Stein. Gallis, le jeu aux Dames.

### **1608 DIEGO GONZALEZ HOLGUIN**

A Spanish missionary and linguist, he was born in Caceres in 1552 and died in Mendoza (Argentina) in 1628. In 1581 he was sent to Peru. He wrote several works about the indigenous language there. So we see in one of his works (Gonzales 1608/1989):

Playing Alquerque	= ttaptani cuni
Alquerque Game	= ttaptana
Chest	= castilla taptana
Chest Board	= castillo taptana

## 1611 SEBASTIAN DE COVARRUBIAS Y OROZCO

A Spanish grammarian and priest. He was a famous Canonist and expert in ancient age. He also taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He wrote several works, among them *Treasure of the Castilian or Spanish Language*. This was an etymological dictionary of the Spanish language that despite certain naivety and lack of precision is still an indispensable work (Covarrubias, 1611):

Alquerque es un juego de piedrecillas, sobre un tablero rayado que haze diversos quadros, y por las rayas van moviéndose, y quando hallan tercera casa vacía del contrario, passan a ella, ganándole la piedra que estava en medio; que algunas vezes acaece ser dos y tres, y si pudiendo tomar, no lo haze, pierde la suya, y por termino propio se la soplan. En griego se llama este juego schyraphia.

### **Loose translation:**

Alquerque is a game of little stones over a stripped board, making different squares and for the stripe the player goes moving and when they find the contender's third house empty, go there, winning the stone which was placed in the middle and which sometimes can be two or three. If being able to take it he refuses to do it, he will lose his own by blowing. This game is called schyraphia in Greek.



**Sebastian de Covarrubias y Orozco**

## **1612 LUDOVICO BERTONIO**

This Italian let us know the following (Bertonio 1612/1984):

Alquerque = cumisina, y lo mismo significa axedrez, porque los indios no distinguen los juegos, sino miran al modo.

Alquerque jugar; o al axedrez; cumisina. por ser juego semejante al nuestro.

Tablero de axedrez, molinillo, alquerque etc. Cumisiña tabla.

### **Loose translation:**

Alquerque means cumisina, and the same means chess, because the Indians do not distinguish the games, but the way they look.

Playing alquerque; or chess; cumisina, because it is similar to our game.

Chess boards, marro, alquerque etc. Cumisina, tric-tac.

Bertonio probably hispanicized the term *molinillo* in his mother tongue, where the used term was *mulinello* (Fiske, 1905:106-110).

### **1615 FELIPE GUAMAN POMA DE AYALA**

This writer expressed in one manuscript the events which took place in Peru between Francisco Pizarro and his prisoner, the Incan Atagualpa.

(....) De cómo estando preso conversava Atagualpa Ynga con don Francisco Pizarro y don Diego de Almagro y con los demás españoles y jugava con ellos en el juego de axedrés que ellos les llaman taptana.

(Guaman Poma de Ayala, 1615/1987).

#### **Loose translation:**

Being prisoner, Atagualpa talked with Don Francisco Pizarro and Don Diego de Almagro and with the other Spanish men. He also played chess, which they called taptana.

(Guaman Poma de Ayala, 1615/1987).

There is a reference here to the alquerque game, which due to being played with chess pieces was mixed up with chess - even in the name. In the attached drawing it can be seen very clearly that it is an alquerque board. On the right, instead of a 9 piece-board the emblem or Inca weapon appears. On the left underneath the black and white little stones used in alquerque can be seen.





**The prisoner Atagualpa**

## **1617 PIETRO CARRERA**

Pietro Carrera (1578-1647) was a Sicilian Archpriest, theorist, and chess player. In 1617 he published a treatise about chess, which was an excellent source for knowing more about chess and the players in his time. His work manages in an exquisite way some of the probable ancient Roman game boards and its authors ancient and current, and also describes some games that are similar to the checkers game. The following text from his book refers to checker and similar games. (Carrera, 1617: 32-33):



**Pietro Carrera**

Insorge un'altra opposizione tenuta da Celio Calcagnino uno de' maggiore *lettera de'* suoi tēpi nel discorso, ch'egli fa del gioco, et e questa, che il gioco de gli Scacchi non sia stato conosciuto da gli antichi, la quale opinione seguono huomini dottissimi, allegando che quelle memorie di Scacchi, che si ritrovano in Martiale, in Seneca, et in altri s'intendono per gli Scacchi della Riga, e non per gli scacchi del nostro gioco del quale ragioniamo, iche non esser vero proveremo co diverse, e fondate ragioni, et anco con autorita di huomini gravi scusisi il Calcagnino, perche gli mancava la intiera notitia del gioco, senza laquale non potea osservare, et esaminare à pieno le proprietati di esso, lequali si leggono sparse per li scrittori. Prima fia necessario di spiegare la cognitione de' *giochi della Riga* affinche il tutto rimanga dilucidato.

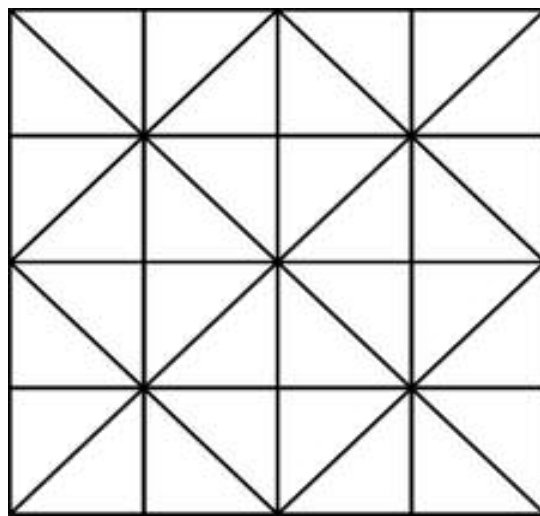
La Riga appresso gli antichi era di trè maniere, uno come afferma Celio Rodigino nel lib. 20 nel cap. 27 delle antiche lettioni p autorita di Eustatio, conteneva sessante Scacchi parte

bianchi, e parte neri, et questa era chimata Grammismus, Digrammismus e Gramma. che son l'instesso, che linea, ancorchè Gramma, significasse ogni Riga; cio conferma Giulio Polluce nel Dittionario così ragionádo. "Si accosta di presso aqsto gioco"; (Perciochè avanti haveva ragionato di gli Scacchi) Il Gramismo, e'l Digramissare, ilqual gioco è domandato da alcuni le linee. Questa Riga à nostri di è ignota, et estinta; Mi maraviglio, che non sia stata conosciuta dal Calcagnino, ilquale ragione diffusamente della seconda, ch'è quella, laqual si giocava, et hoggidi ancora si gioca cõ dodici pietre bianche, et altrettante nere. Cicerone in Hortensio "Itaque tibi concedo, quod in duodecim scrupis olim, ut calculum reducas, si te alicuius dati poeniteat." Quintiliano nel lib. 10 nel cap. 2: "An vero Scevola in lusu duodecim scruporum cû prior calculum promovisset". Si divide questa Riga, como mostra la seguite figura in cinque linee ritagliate perdritto, et altrettante per fianco con due altre linee, che la fiedono p traverso terminan dosi negli angoli, si veggono in essa ancora quatro quadri della Riga, e sciascuna di esse abbraccia trè case, ma ciascuna delle linee maggiori così rette, como oblique ne ha cinque, et in queste seggono le pietre del gioco, eccetto la linea di mezzo, che ha quatro luoghi ripieni di pietre, perchè la casa, ch'è nel mezzo di essa, riman vota. Questa linea di mezo da gli anticha era detta Sacra, perciochè no era lecito senza gran necessita di muovere le pietre di qualla, onde nacque il Proverbio "Muovere alique à Sacra", il quale significa constringere alcuno adatto di estrema necessita. Theocrito nel 6. Idillio "E da linea remove la pietra". Le pietre, le quali arrivano all'ultima linea secondo Isidoro, come riferisce Giosepe Scaligero sopra il 6. lib. Di Varrone, si chiamavano Inciti

(Intorno à cio mi par necessario di avvertire, che questa Riga è diverso di quel gioco, che i Siciliani chimano Marrella, e gli Spagnuoli el juego de las Damas, benche habbiano alcune cose comuni ad ambidue i giochi; delquale no veggo, che ne faccia mentione scrittore alcuno).

### **Loose translation:**

Another opposition, from Celio Calcagninus, one of the great wise men of his time, in his treatise says that chess was not known by the ancients. This opinion is supported by the great genius and the argument about the reference to chess found by Martialis, Seneca, and others, has to do with the game of chess over a Riga board and not with the current chess game. We cannot determine with conclusive proof if that is true, nor use the authority of a serious man like Calcagninus, because he lacks knowledge about the game and without it the observation and detailed examination of the game's features cannot be done. We found little about it in this writer's work. Firstly, it is necessary to discover what is known about the Riga game and in this way clarify it all.



**Alquerque board shown by Carrera**

The Riga game, as we have been taught by the ancient, was played in 3 ways: The first, Celius Rodiginus confirms in the 20th book, chapter 27 of the treatment of ancient age, quoting the authority of Eustatius, was played with 60 pieces, one part white and another part black. The name of the game was Grammismus, Digrammismus, and Gramma. Gramma always means Riga (line). This is also confirmed by Julius Pollux in his

Onomasticon. It is similar to this game (we already have figured that this game before (Grammismus and Diagrammismus were similar stripped games. These versions of Riga are not known today, they are extinguished.

I was startled about the fact that with Calcagninus we don't know more about the second game, which he barely mentioned and which is still today played with 12 little black and 12 little white stones. Cicero talks about it in Hortensio **Itaque tibi concedo, quod in duodecim scrupis olim, ut calculum reducas, si te alicuius dati poeniteat.** I allow you, as we usually do in the 12 little stone games, to retire the play (piece) if you regret to move it. Quintilian in the 10th book, chapter 2: **An Vero Scaevola in lusu duodecim scruporum cū prior calculum promovisset.** (We have said that Scaevola, in which the move could be done after a 12 little stones game) This Riga game, it's shown in the next drawing divided by 5 lines: 5 vertical, 5 horizontal, and 2 diagonal lines from angle to angle. This way 4 frames for the mini Riga game were formed. They allow about three little stones in the lines. But in each one of the big straight lines and the diagonal lines 5 little stones are allowed, with the exception of the middle line where 4 little stones are placed, because the center square must be empty. This middle line was the "Sacra Line" for the ancient and it was not allowed, except as a last resource, take from here the little stones. So the proverb: *Movere alicuius à Sacra* "Only for extreme necessity this action must be done" had originated. Theocritus in the Idylle six: To change the piece of line. The piece which arrives to the last line, Isidorus said, quoted by Scaliger in his Varro work, was named "inciti" (immobile).

Considering all this it is necessary to say that this Riga game is different from the game which the Sicilians call *Marrella* and the Spanish call *Checkers*, despite the two games having some features in common and of it I didn't see that any writer were quoted.

Brunet (1890:205) makes the following observation: *If the game that the Sicilians named Marrella coincides with our Checkers game, the Sicilian name could demonstrate that this is derived from the predecessor of the Riga 12, equal to our Marro. This word actually could be a diminutive of the Sicilian Marrella.*

## 1627 MATTHEW RADER

This Austrian Jesuit and philosopher was born in 1561 in Innichen (Tirol) and died in 1634 in Munich. His more famous work is the noted edition of *The Epigrams of Martialis* (1599 and followers). Raderus (1627:527 and 528) mentions Calcagninus:

Mandris: regionibus, seu urbibus expono cum Calagnino lib. de ludo talorum, tesserarum, et calculorum alio qui bis idem diceret, si mandras pro latronibus accipias, alia notione supra lib. 5 epig. 27 hanc vocem usurpavit, ubi mandram claustrum, seu septum ovium, boum, mularum, aut ipsas mulas diximus. Hinc credo sumpta metaphora, ut calculorum, seu latronum sedes (Graeci nominant mandras) hic appellarit quas regiones Pollux et Eustathius vocant et urbes.

Latrone: calculi latrones ab insidiando decebantur, et canes: Graece ... Latinus primum calculi, seu scrupi, deinde latrones, et canes. Erant in abaco, quem ... Graeci vocant, ceu tu laterculum dicas, regiones lineis distinctae: has urbes nuncupabant, unde in proverbium abiit...., cum res parvas magnis nominibus afficimus, et ollas exornamus. Erant hae regiones plerumque quinque, lineolis, transversariisque, et decussationibus alternatim dimensae, quinque, et viginti numero, singulis latrones quinque insistebant, praeter mediam, qui tantum quatuor tribuebantur.

distincti hostili animo insidiantes. Ea fuit ludi ratio, ut si unus ex

hostili agmine incommitatus deprehenderetur, ita ut circumveniri posset, captivus ex acie traheretur. Ab eo linearum numero Sophocles ..., id est, pessa quinque lineis distincta vocitasse fertur. Ex quibus quae media fuit, sacra dicebatur, a qua movere calculum religio fuit, ni magna, et inevitabilis quaedam urgeret necessitas. Hinc proverbium oritur est ..., hunc moveo a sacra, cum extra praesidia implorantur. Et plura his Calpurnius quae ibidem leges. Martialis lib. 14 ep. 17. "Calculus hinc gemino discolor hoste perit (et epig. 20) Insidiosorum si ludus bella latronum, Gemmeus (vitreus) iste tibi miles, et hostis erit". In calculorum ludo sunt lineae tantum quinque, et sedecim regiones, seu orbes, seu quadra. In Scaporum vero novem lineae, et regiones 64.

### **Loose translation:**

**Mandra (Martialis Book 5, epigram 27):** I agree with Calpurnius when he says in his book about the board games and dice that that word is used twice in the thieves' game, otherwise meaning a **fenced territory** (block) for sheep, bovine, and donkeys. I think that the metaphorical meaning of the word is 'places where the game pieces or thieves are settled' (mandris in Greek) which Pollux names as regions and Eustathius as metropolis (cities). **Latro**: mercenary soldier, thief. The pieces (calculi) are traitors and thieves. In Latin they were called **canes** (dogs). They are in what the Romans call **abacus** and we a game board, which is divided by lines in squares: the proverb says about the cities that with small feats the great men become weak and the pantries are provided. The places to play (intersection points) were made by drawing 5 horizontal and vertical lines which resulted in 25 intersection points. It was the reason why 5 thieves always met in a line, with the exception of the middle line where only 4 thieves were allowed.

Justifying either part, thieves or dogs, distinguished by color, it must be said that treason and passion were born from the spirit

of this game. If one went towards an enemy without a companion, he was encircled and taken as prisoner on the battlefield. Sophocles says that soldiers usually march five in a line. About what was mentioned in reference to the middle line, which was called sacara, a piece from there could only be taken as a last resort. This way the proverb ‘call additional protection’ was born. Calcagninus quotes Martialis (Book 14, epigram 17): A piece between two pieces of another color is considered lost. And in Epigram 20: If you play the thieves’ game, glass pieces will be your soldiers and your enemies. In the group of pieces there are only five lines and 16 sections or squares. However, in the game of chess there are nine lines and 64 sections.

### **1645 Hugo Grotius**

In 1603 20 years old Hugo Grotius wrote 9 epigrams in Latin about the games (Bakker, 1992:15). He wrote the following about checkers or the alquerque game:

Ludus duodenorum scruporum. Jeu de dames. - alquerque?  
Scrupea bella vides, Danaumque & Memnonis arma: Vicisse est,  
hostes transiliisse suos (Groot, 1645:305).

### **Loose Translation**

Game of 12 pieces. One can see wars and pieces, Greek weapons, and the Memnon's weapons. Victory is accomplished by jumping over the enemies.



## 1667 ANDREAS SENFTLEBIUS

This German lawyer was born in 1603 and died in 1642. Among other works he wrote the book *Librum de Alea Veterum* which was edited in 1677 in Leipzig:

IV Lineae: Hae ita erant formatae, ut varios et triangulos et quadrangulos repraesentarent: De triangulis ita loquitur Freigius in notis ad Lud. Vivis Exercitationes dial. VI: Regiones variis lineis et triangulis quadrati in sedecim quadrata ex latere quadrisecto divisi: Cui inscribantur duae diagonii et quadratum dimidium circumscripti. Raderus autem ad ep. Mart. ita explicat: Erant in abaco regiones lineis distinctae, has urbes nuncupabant, unde et in Proverbium abiit: ... cum res parvas magnis nominibus afficimus, et ollas exornamus. Erant hae regiones plerumque quinque lineolis transversariisque et decussationibus alternatim dimensae, quinque et viginti numero, singulis latrones quinque insistebant, praeter mediam, cui tantum quatuor tribuebantur. (Senftleben 1667:172-190; Gronovius, 1699) Freigius tale ponit Schema:

### Loose translation:

**IV. Lines:** The form can be described as several triangles and squares. About the triangular form Freigius says in his notes **Lud. Vives Exercitationes dial VI:** The regions are divided by lines in triangles and 16 squares and from the sides in 4 sections: engraving in them 2 diagonals, originating squares by half. Raderus, the author of *Martialis Epigrams*, explains:  
In the board game there are regions divided by lines which are reserved for the cities which give origin to the proverb: with small feats the great men become weak and the pantries are provided. These regions are formed by 5 horizontal and vertical lines which alternate with lines drawn in crosses and count 25 in total. In the first line there were thieves, but in the middle line

only 4 obtained a place. Freigius draws a board of Alquerque 12 here.

## 1695 THOMAS HYDE

Thomas Hyde (1636-1703) was an English orientalist and Hebrew professor at Queen's College Oxford in 1658. He studied Arabic, Persian, Syriac, and Chinese. He wrote several books. In the first of 2 volumes of one of his works in Latin, *Ludis Orientalibus*, he researches the origin of chess. Hyde concluded that the game was invented in India (Universal Illustrated Encyclopedia 1980, Vol 28 P. 784). In his book Hyde describes the checkers game too. He takes much information from Covarrubias, whom we have quoted before. Hyde (1694) thought that the word **dame** was derived from the German word **dam**, but he could not support his statement with any proof.

### Thomas Hyde

Hispani quatuor hujus Ludi Nomina habent: quorum unum est **Las Damas**, superius dictum. Alterum est **Alquerque**. Tertium est **Castro**: quartum **Real**.

### Loose translation:

The Spanish have four names for this game today. The first is **Las Damas**, previously described. The second is **Alquerque**. The third is **Castro**. The fourth is **Real**.



**Thomas Hyde**

## **1706 JULIUS POLLUX**

In this edition of his book a description - sometimes in a drawing - of the alquerque board can be found. There are several notes from Calcagninus, Freigius, Erasmus, Raderus [or Rader], and Senftlebius. They indicate the Soldiers' Game, Cities' Game (polis), and Game of Pieces as the names of the game. They think that alquerque is similar to the games that the Romans and Greeks played in ancient times. Unfortunately they actually did not mention the rules of the game. Calcagninus's description is undoubtedly the most interesting of all. (Pollucis, 1706)

## **3. 1734 F. DE FICORONI**

This Italian Abad, archeologist, and numismatist was born in 1664 and died in Rome in 1747. The text below is a shortened Italian translation of Calcagninus's text (before 1541) and is an addition to the description of the game of Alquerque 12 (Ficoroni, 1734):

p. 23/24:

Discorda dalla mentovate opinioni Celio Calcagnini, quale nella descrizione minuta, se bene a mio credere non totalmente chiara, che fa di tal giuoco, assegna ad esso dodici calcoli per parte divisi in due decine, de in quattro Caporali, due per parte: e perchè al parer di Vegezio il manipolo era composto di dieci soldati abitanti sotto la stessa tenda; perciò chiama questi calcoli soldati manipolari. Divide poi ciascheduna decuria in due parti, collocando in due file cinque soldati per ciascheduna, e postando nella fila di mezzo y due Caporali alla custodia delle loro piccole compagnie. Che se alcun soldato si fosse partito dal suo posto, avea per pena l'esser sorpeso dall' inimico, e perire; il che essendo facile a seguire, se si fossero lasciati aperti if fianchi della squadriglie; perciò v'era legge, che niuno uscisse dalla

linea, che dicevasi sacra, de era quella di mezzo, a cui presedevano y due Caporali. Con ciò viene egli ad avere ciascheduno degli eserciti composto di tre ordini, quanti erano quelle della milizia Romana, che dentro vi riconosce, como in ritratto.

### **Loose translation:**

Celio Calcagninus didn't agree with the given opinions, which are precise in the description, and although they are good, I think that they do not clearly reflect how the game was played. 12 pieces were settled on each side of the board; two tens and four corporals, 2 from each side because according to Vegezio the **manipolo** was formed by ten of the same soldiers (in a tent). That is why those pieces are called manipel soldiers. Every ten are divided into two groups and 5 soldiers are placed in 2 rows and in the middle line 2 corporals are settled to protect their little company. At the moment when one soldier leaves his place his enemy captures and kills him. And such thing is not easy to accomplish if the crew flanks are open. That is why there was a law which said that no one could allow this line (which the two corporals protected) vulnerable. This way an army of 3 rows is obtained, as in the Roman Army which intimately recognized itself, like in a painting.

## THE ALQUERQUE MOTTO IN DICTIONARIES:

### TESORO LEXICOGRÁFICO (LEXICOGRAPHY TREASURE) 1492-1726, S.G. GAYA (1947)

#### Alquerque

Nebrija (1495):	Calculorum ludus
Brocense (1580):	Arab. querque (Sánchez, 1580)
Tamarid (1585):	es juego (López Tamarid, 1585)
Percival (1599):	a kind of game or game somewhat differing from table game.
Rosal (1601):	en arab. es juego (Rosal, 1585)
Palet (1604):	damier à iouer
Oudin (1607):	jeu des eschets ou de dames, c'est aussi un ieu qui se fait avec des gettons.
Covarrubias (1611):	(see the earlier description in this chapter)
Francios (1620):	gioco del filetto (Franciosini, 1620)
Henriquez (1679):	juego de pedrecicas, calculorum ludus.
	Viridarium: ludus calculorum

### HISTORIC DICTIONARY OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE (1981):

Alquerque, alcuerque, alcorque (?)

(From Arabic. al-qirq **the game of 3 in a line**)

Alcorque, var. Doubtful in a ms. of ca. 1600 from the Book Cám. Real de Fernández Oviedo, cfr. acep. 2a b Cf. (alquer).

*Most of the data quoted in this dictionary are known, but we reflect them for greater clarity.*

**1.A game similar to that of 3 in a line, of which several modalities existed.**

1283 Alfonso X Acedrez (1941) 362, 17 - 362, 26 - 368,13  
 ca. 1529 Guevara: M. Aurelio y Relox Principes (1658) 92a  
 1539 Guevara: Arte de Marear (1895) 56  
 1603 Luque Faxardo: Desengaño juegos <196>  
 (Calcagninus / Ficoroni)



**Corporal**  
**(Calcagninus/Ficoroni)**

## **2. Striped board used for this game**

1283 *Alfonso X Acedrex* (1941) 364,13 - 364,30 - 364,33

### **1553 *Lopez Gómara, Conq. México* 42a:**

algunas veces mirava Motecçuma cómo jugavan al Patoliztli, que parece mucho al juego de las tablas. Y que se juega con havas o frisoles <...>. Los quales menean entre ambas manos. Y los echan sobre una estera <...> donde hay ciertas rayas, como alquerque. (See previous translation in this chapter)

1786 Dicc. Terreros: - or alcuerque: Divided striped board to play with pebbles, kind of like checkers or chess.

### **b. Figure similar to this board**

c. 1600 Book Cam. Real *Fdz Oviedo* (Ms, T88, 1870) 147 note:  
Otro se dize Navarra, y trae <de armas> un marro o alquerque de  
cadenas de oro en campo de goles vel sanguino. (var. ms. E110:  
trae en el escudo el marro o alcorque de las cadenas de oro).

1495 *Nebriya [of Nebrija]*, et 1593 *Guadix* <158>

1726-1970 Ac. 1786 Dicc. *Terreros*, Et. <*Terreros* recoge alquerque  
y alcuerque>

### **1593 HOLLYBAND**

Le jeu des Merelles = the play of Dammes: or five penie morice  
(Hollyband, 1593)

### **1598 NICOT**

Le ieu des Merelles = *Scruporum ludus*, B. (Nicot, 1606)

### **1617 JOHN MINSHEU**

Playing draughts is:

G. Iouer aux dames, T.B. Dammen, It. Giocare alle dame. H. Iugar de  
alquerque P. Iogar de alquerque, L. Ludere Scrupis Gr. Lusus  
*Scruporum*, Vi. Draughts supra (Minsheu, 1617)

The boardgame draughts is:

G. Jeu de Dames, Dames. Ital. le dame, giuco di dame, H. las Damas,  
Iuego de las damas, P. iogo de Damas, B. Dame-spel, dam-spel,  
damen, dammen.



### **1627 CEASAR OUDIN**

dames, ieu dames, il gioco di damme her what scacchiero. game of alquerque.

dames. il tavolero. alquerque, Board (Oudin, 1627)

### **MONET 1630**

Duodecim scruporum palaestra - (Probably) checkers

Dames:

Le ieu pratiquons nous avec les tables, avec les Romains you traitoient des Cailloux, ou MEREAUX (for hopscotch), dont lui est le nom de scrupi Demeure (...) (Monet, 1630)

### **MONET 1636**

Duodecim scruporum palaestra - (Probably) checkers

Dames:

Le ieu pratiquons nous avec les tables, avec les Romains you traitoient des Cailloux, ou MEREAUX (for hopscotch), dont lui est le nom de scrupi Demeure (...) (Monet, 1636)

### **1639 SCHAT VAN DRIE TALEN**

Ladies, jeu de dames = game alquerque

Damier = alquerque, board (Schat van drie talen, 1639)

### **1646 TROGNESIUS**

Alquerque = jeu ou des dames eschets, c'est aussi un jeu qui se fait avec des gettons / schaekspel. Damier = Alquerque, board (Trognesius, 1646)

### **1659 ARNAUD DE LA PORTE**

Schaeck-scijve = Pieca of alquerque, Pieca board

Alquerque = schaekspel

Dames, jeu de dames = game of alquerque (Porte, 1659)

### **1706 ESTEBAN DE TERREROS (85)**

(....) o alcuerque = tablero rayado y dividido, para jugar con piedrecitas, al modo de juego de damas o ajedrez. (Terreros, 1786-1793)

#### **Loose translation:**

(....) Or alcuerque = striped board and divided, to play with pebbles, kind of like checkers or chess. (Terreros, 1786-1793)

### **1712 DANETIUS**

Scrupis ludere = Jouer aux dames à la marelle ou avec petits cailloux, Polis. (Danetius, 1712)

### **1718 TREASURY DAS DOS VOCABULOS DUAS LINGUAS**

(Alewijn, 1718)

Game of Alquerque: A game played with small stones.

### **1759 M. DE SEJOURNANT**

Alquerque = T. Arab. Espèce de jeu de dames. Lat. calculorum ou Scruporum ludus. (Sejournant, 1759)

**1763 GIRAL DELPINO**

Alquerque, The game of draughts (Giral, 1763)

**1786 J. BARETTI**

Alquerque = The game of draughts (Baretti, 1786)

**1790 GATTEL**

Alquerque, Arab. Espèce of jeu de dame. Scruporum Ludus. (Gattel, 1790)

**1795 CA SCHMIDT: SPANISH DICTIONARY**

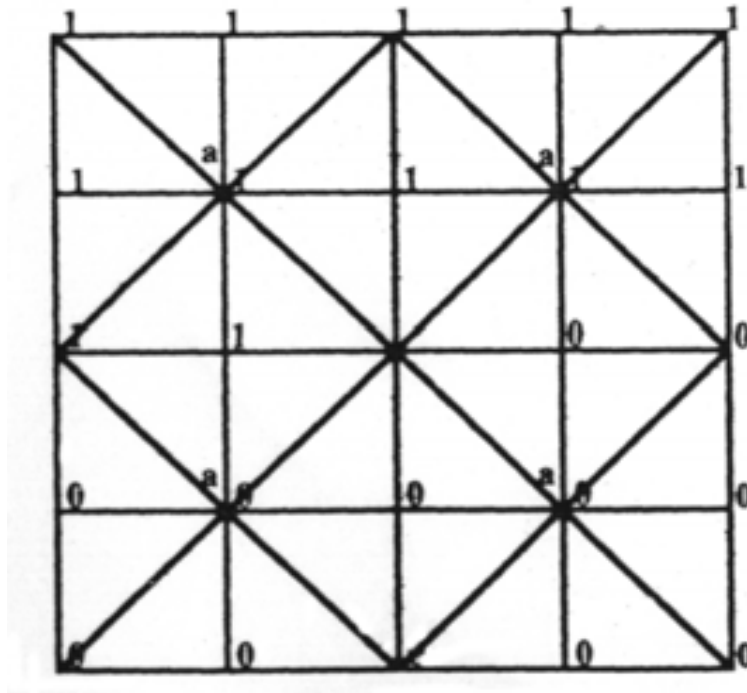
Alquerque = Eine Art Damenspiel (Schmidt, 1795)



Arnaldo de la Porte: Dictionary. With images of:  
 Trognesium, Meurier, Sasbout, Kiliaan, Nicot, Oudin

## DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF ALQUERQUE

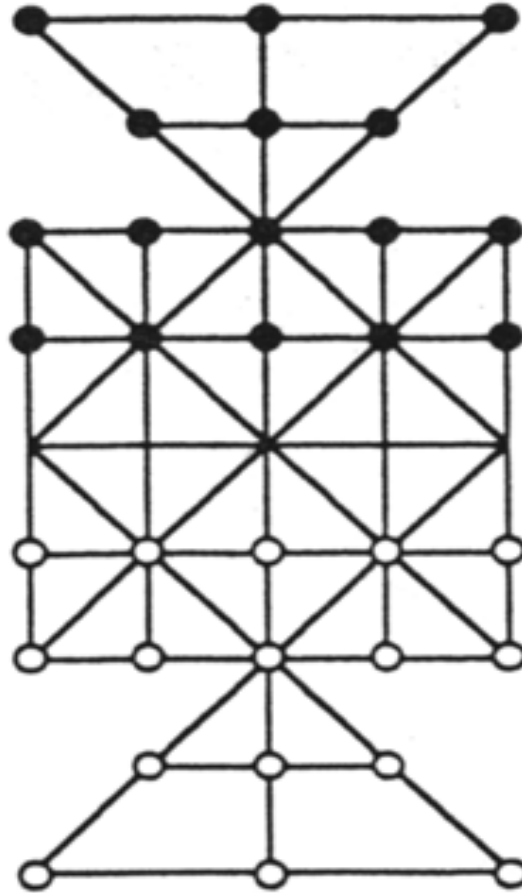
### ERSÊSÊR - 12 PIECES



**Ersêsêr**

This alquerque game was described by Neuman (1906:360) and Joustra (1910:142; 1926:151) who knew 4 variations. Each player had 12 pieces, as reflected in the drawing. The original way is to capture each other, but the writer does not say whether the pieces can be moved backward, so this is something we have to admit. One capture till the enemy has no more pieces or has blocked them all. If a piece is placed on an intersection point **a**, then the enemy pieces that are on the edge at the ends of the line have been blocked and can be captured. It is played in Central Sumatra. (Jansen, 1992:40-41)

## DAM-DAMAN - 16 PIECES

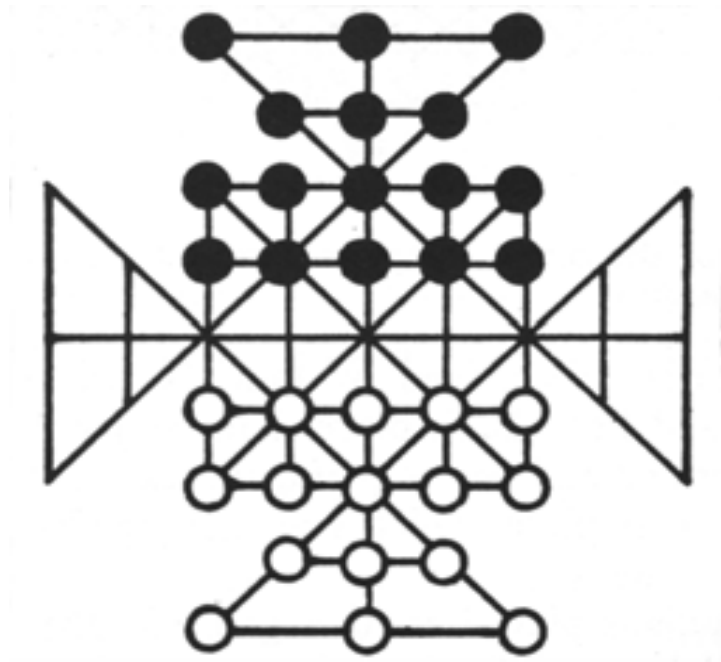


**Dam-Daman  
Tampul**

In Java a type of game of checkers is played under the name **Dam-daman** (Encyclopedie van Nederlandsch-Indië, 1921:57,61; Engelhards, 1884:315; Campbell, 1915:1017) which has 16 pieces. We find the same game again according to Maasz (1910:317) in Central Sumatra under the name **Thatoer**. Hasselt (1882:127) uses the term **Tjatoewe**. Veth (1882:127) speaks of **Tjatuwe**. This type of game of checkers is still practiced today in Indonesia (Jansen, 1992:40-41). This game can be found in Malaysia (Plischke, 1890:189-194). Cense (1869) uses the term game of checkers for a game with 16 pieces.

The Bataks also practice a game in which 16 pieces are used and where the center square is not empty at the beginning, but all parts of the middle line. Dr. Winkler (1926) says that this game is called **Tampul** and that the board is recognized as a **Usir** board. Klinkert (1926) mentions a game with 16 red pieces and 16 white pieces called **tabal**. This game can be found under other names in Sri Lanka and Pakistan, as we can see in Botermans' 1989 book.

## **SOLDIERS GAME – 16 PIECES**

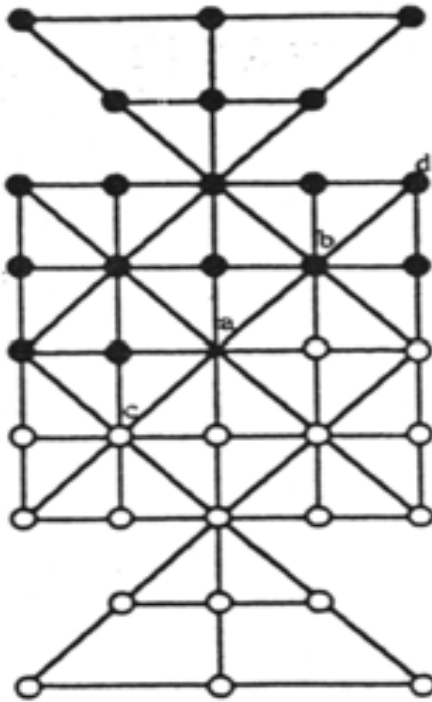


**Soldiers game**

This game is practiced in Ceylon and India, in which each player has 16 pieces. A variant of this game is one with 23 pieces; Bell (1979) used to say that for this a triangle was placed to the left and right. Worth mentioning is the fact that the game of alquerque is known in India under the name of "draughts". (Gupta, 1924: new series 20).



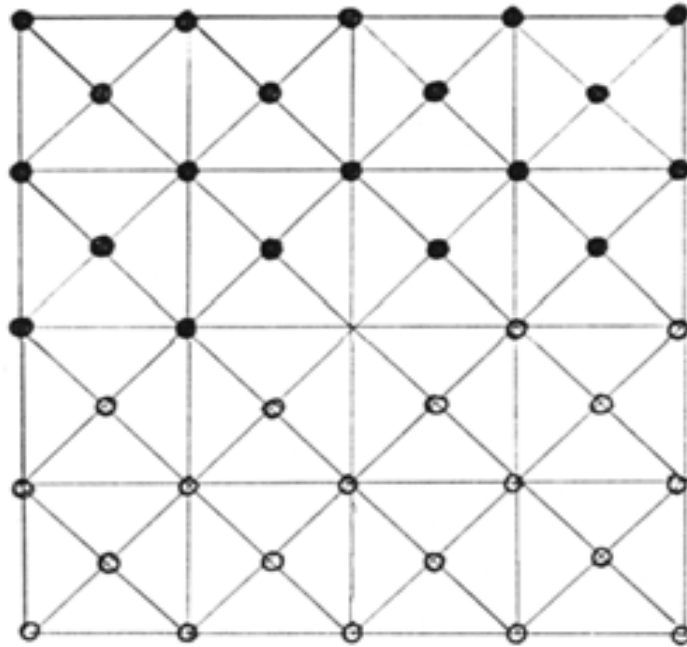
## MALINGAN – 18 PIECES



**Malingan**

*Maasz* confirms that the game of thieves with 2x18 pieces was practiced in Sumatra and is also called **main-main batu** according to Raffles (1817). The game is mostly called Malingan = game of thieves = translation of the Roman game **Ludus Latrunculorum**. (Jansen, 1992:40-41).

## TÛKUNANAWÖPI - 20 PIECES



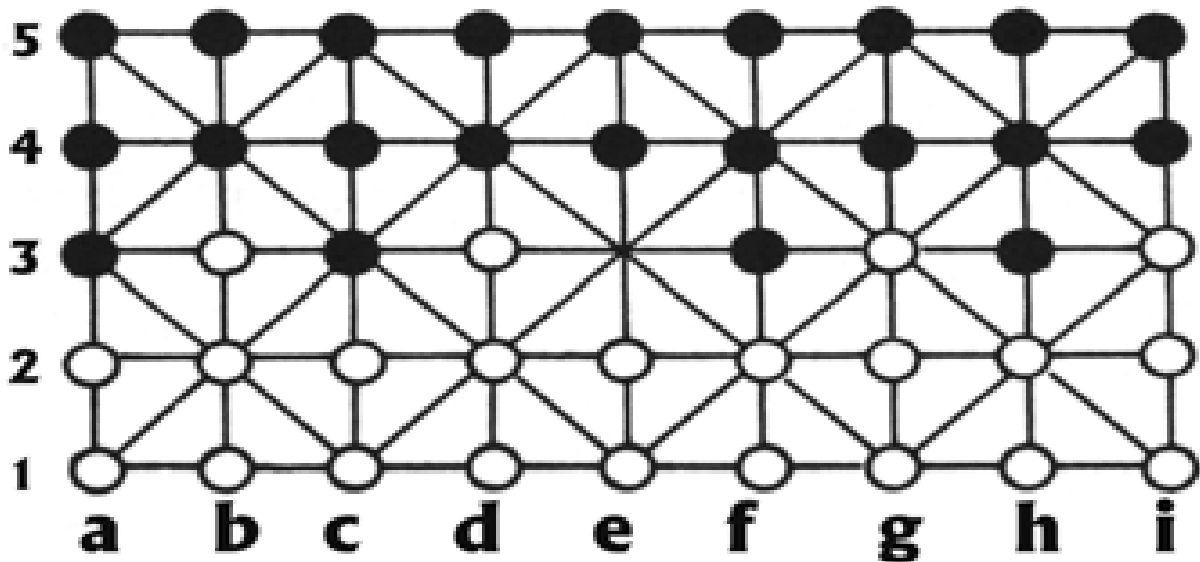
**Tûkunanawöpi**

Culin (1907) describes this type of alquerque usually played by 2 or 4 people. Each player has 20 pieces (animals) and can play or capture in any direction. Removing an enemy piece is performed by capturing into an empty square just behind the enemy piece. As soon as a row of points of intersections is free of pieces, it is no longer used, so at the end of the game it takes place in very few points of intersections. Those no longer participating in the game are called **houses** and the pieces (animals) are placed over them. According to Botermans (1989) this version is also called **Zamma** in the Sahara.

### **Tûkunanawöpi**

Everything here also indicates that the word *houses* derives from the Spanish word **casas**.

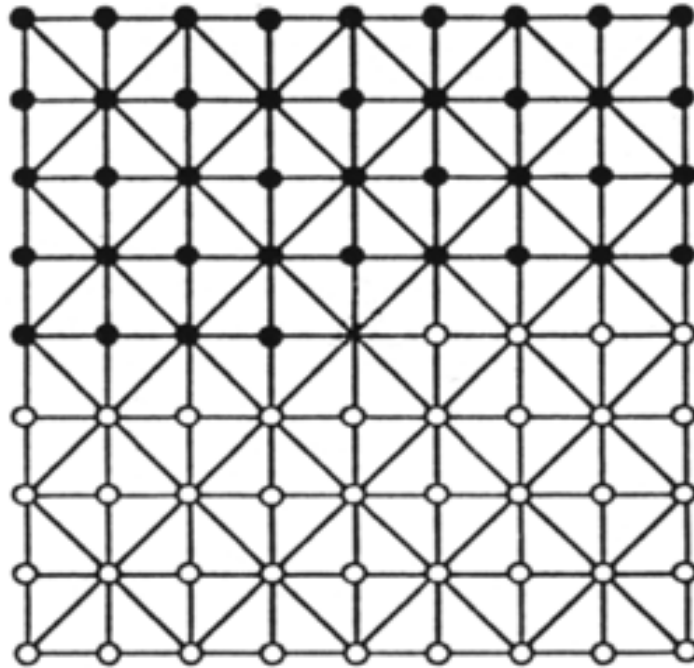
## FANORONA - 22 PIECES



**Fanorona (Malagasy chess)**

According to Bell (1979) this game was invented in 1680 in Madagascar by taking a double alquerque board. This game was described by Montgomery (1896) Chauvicourt (1980), Thanassecoset (1977), and Fox (1984).

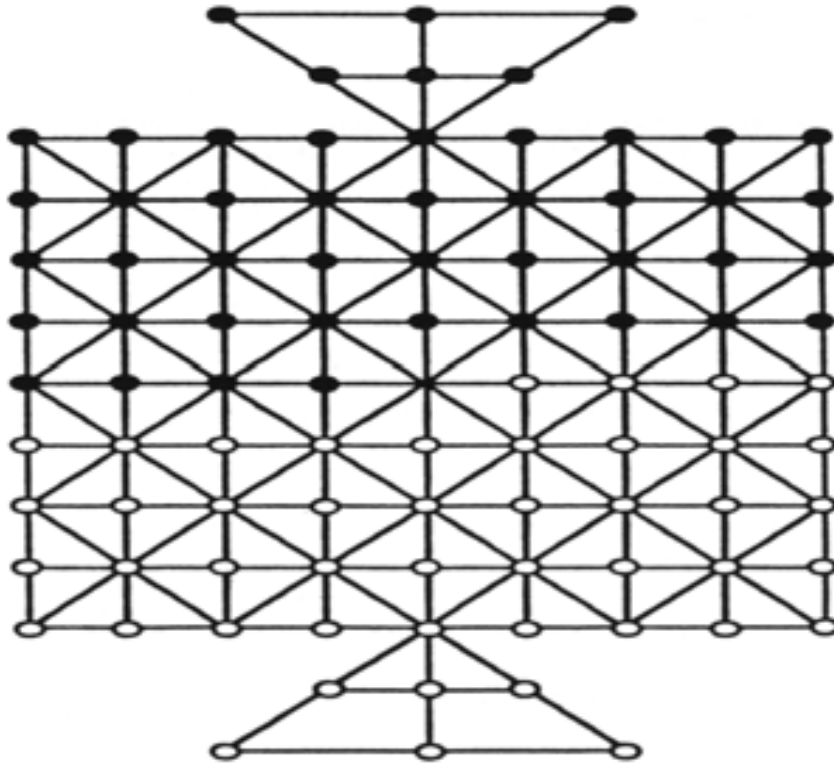
## MEURIMUËNG - RIMUËNG PENËT PLOH - 40 PIECES



Meurimuëng - Rimuëng Penët Ploh

Raffles (1817:350), Eggink (1932:700), and Snouck (1894:209; 1906) mention this game called **Tiger game**, in which each player has 40 pieces. You can move in any direction and capture, but capturing is not mandatory. According to Mayer (1867: 322) and Coolsma (1910) In Java this game is called **dam-adman** originating from the Dutch word dam. Béart (1955) tells us that in the Sahara this game was practiced on top of 81 points of intersection under the name **les bâtonnets**. Pieces can only move forward, but capturing is both forward and backward. Murray (1952: 25-26) reflects this in his book under the name **Damma** and **Zamma** and Monod (1950:11-12) uses the term **Damma**. Jansen (1993: 22-23) talks about this game in Hoofdlijn. **Dam-daman**

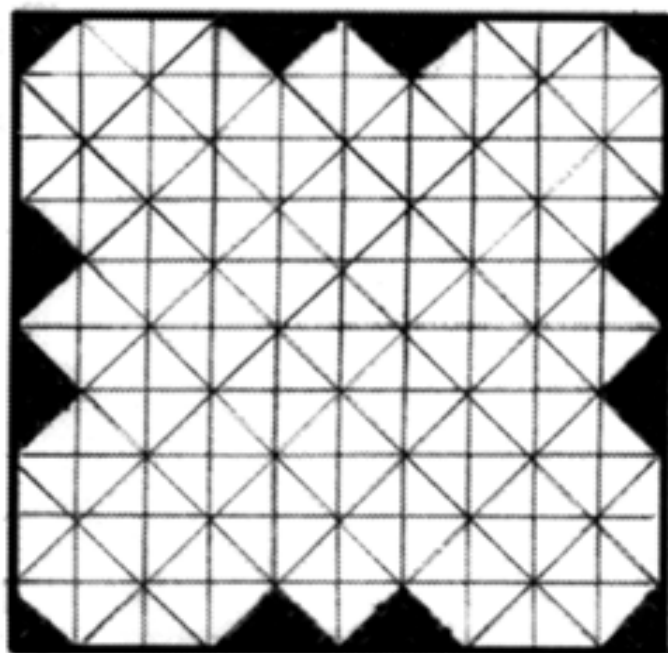
## SATOEL - 46 PIECES



**Satoel**

A game of Malay origin, as reported by Jacobson (1919), in which each player has 46 pieces. Now you should try, turn by turn, to capture the maximum amount of enemy pieces. An enemy piece is captured by jumping over it if the intersection point behind the enemy piece is unoccupied. You can also capture more pieces at once, provided that there are empty points of intersection between the pieces. You can capture in any direction - forward, backward, orthogonally, and vertically. Pieces also move in any direction from one intersection point to another. The one who loses all his pieces loses the game. (Jansen, 1993:22-23).

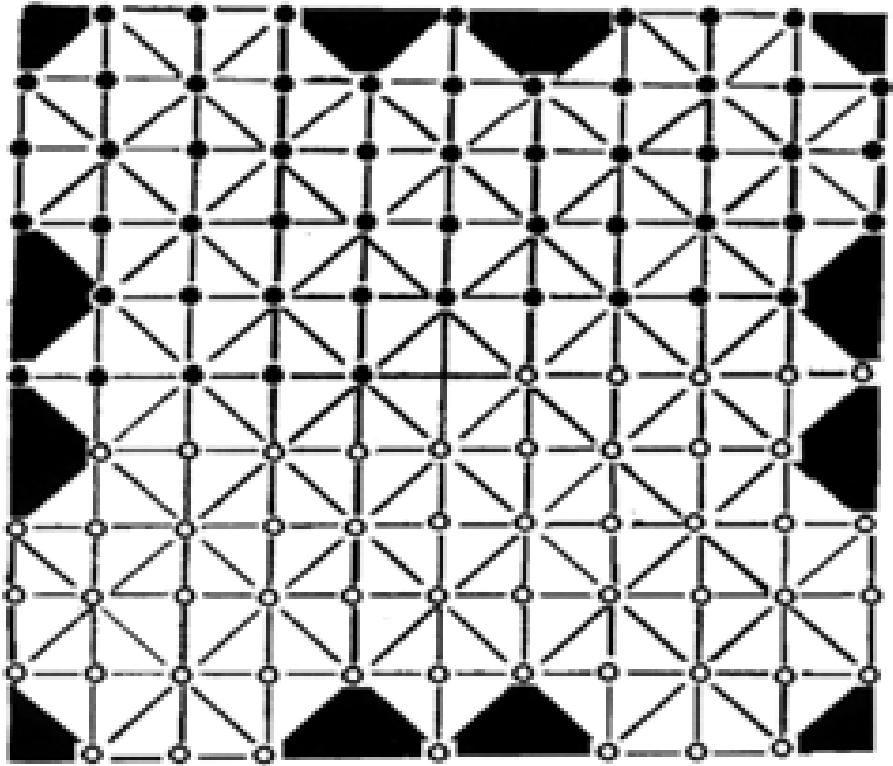
## AMSTERDAM STATE MUSEUM - 54 PIECES



**Rijksmuseum's board at  
Amsterdam. (Alquerque?)**

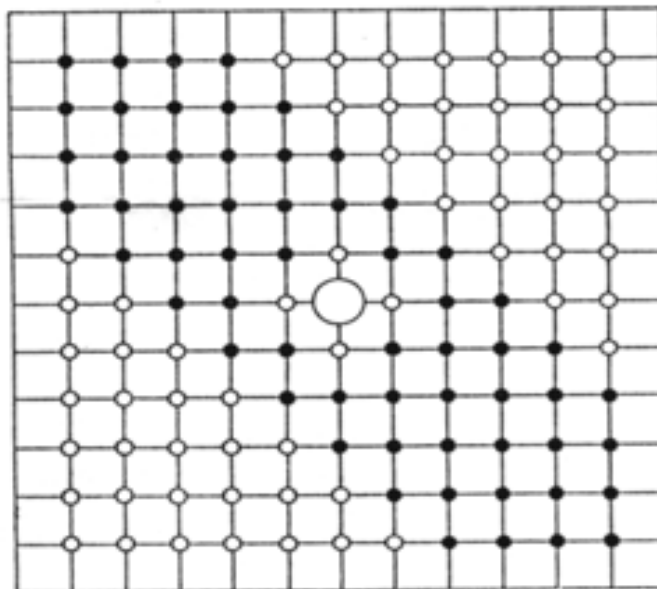
This museum by the name of "Rijksmuseum" has a board for tables, chess and alquerque, consisting of 100 squares. At the edges of the board there are some obscured triangles. If pieces are not placed there, the available number of points of intersection is  $2 \times 54$  with 1 empty point in the center. This amount corresponds to the candidate game of **Penélope** (With Athenaeus). The game board is from the early seventeenth century and probably originated in southern Germany. (Jansen, 1993b).

Caro (1978, volume II, p. 150-152) described the game of 108 candidates of **Penélope**. This game was named in Homerus, Athenaeus (c. 200 AD) and mentioned by all humanists who wrote about the classic games. Rob Jansen (1993b) notes that on the Rijksmuseum board only 108 pieces ( $2 \times 54$ ) can be placed, leaving an empty central place for **Penélope**.



**108 Crown candidates?**

## DIAGRAMMISMOS (GRAMMAI) – 60 PIECES



### Chuki

Several Roman authors have mentioned this game, but we know nothing certain about the board or how it was played. It was played on lines and each player had 60 pieces (Murray 1952: 25-26; Kruijswijk 1966: 164; 1978 Caro, volume I, p 170.). There is a game called **Chuki**. (Murray, 1952: 94; Wall, 1880. Veth (1875:625) uses the term **Tjoeki**. For a further description of the various games similar to alquerque we recommend consulting van Murray's (1952) works.

Finally we note that according to Winter (1930: 6-7) it was played on a board of 144 squares. There was a game called **metjoeki** and it was a kind of game of checkers (Eck 1880, 2:17). Matthes (1875: 126) also mentions a game of checkers **adângang**. Murray (1925: 109-110) confirms that the Dutch brought the game to East India in the seventeenth century. Probably the Spanish or Portuguese introduced the small checkerboard of 64 squares in the seventeenth century, which was later replaced by the Dutch with the large board of 100 squares.



## CONCLUSION

As in the game of marro, historians use the term *juego de fichas* (Schijvenspel in Dutch) for alquerque of twelve, but it was played in Spain in the period between 1283 - c. 1700 with some kind of pawn and that's why I like the term *juego de piezas* (Stukkenspel in Dutch) better.

The board of alquerque 12 - think of a board without pieces - was already known in the Roman times for different games. As several authors from the sixteenth century always refer to the Roman times, it cannot be anything other than the game of checkers going through gradual development. I do not think that alquerque of 12, as described by King Alfonso X the Wise, had already had the "crowning" of the lady (queen) in the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries. Van der Stoep thinks about this possibility, but evidence is needed for such claim. In other words, in my opinion the game of alquerque of 12 has never been a game of checkers, even if this game had the "crowning". The difference between the two games is too big. Therefore there must have been a transitional game. This game could be andarraya, discovered by Rob Jansen, which was probably a game of checkers. This is because a piece that had reached the 8th row could return either in the form of a piece or in the form of a short or weak lady (queen). I need more proof here. But here I see two possibilities. The piece, once arrived in the 8th row, could go back in two diagonal directions and then not have the status of a lady. If, however, the piece, once crowned, could go back and then forward again, i.e. in 4 diagonal directions, then such piece had to be marked. In this case the piece was therefore a short or weak lady (queen).

This game called andarraya is no longer seen in the sixteenth century. The game keeps being played under the name of alquerque, while the game of alquerque of 12, as mentioned in the book of King Alfonso X the Wise, slowly died now that the game of checkers is very popular

on the chessboard and stripes. I see this new game of alquerque, i.e. the previous game of andarraya (eventually the striped system of andarraya on a chessboard) as a game of checkers.

All historians with all their hypotheses always mention the chessboard, but for the game of checkers it is not absolutely necessary - if we think about the game of andarraya.

The fact that dictionaries sometimes mention alquerque as a chess game is because it was played in Spain until 1700 with some kind of a chess pawn on the alquerque board. The same happened with the pawn on the checkerboard.

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Libros manuscrito (.....)

Libros en quarto (....)

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1. "Las dos ediciones del Vocabulario español-latino, atribuidas a c. 1494 por Odriozola, o a c. 1495 por Francisco Garcia Craviotto."

2. "Hacia 1493-1494 - hay quien se decanta por el c. 1495 como hemos visto-apareció, también en Salamanca, el Vocabulario español-latino que presenta, y ello fue una gran innovación en el campo lexicografico, el material ordenado a partir del romance".

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